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Inter-Arab Affairs

Kuwaiti-Egyptian-Saudi Bank Approved

JN1208162089 Kuwait AL-ANBA' in Arabic 10 Aug 89 p 1

[Excerpt] Rashid 'Abdallah al-Miqrin al-Rumi, assistant under secretary of the [Kuwaiti] Trade and Industry Ministry, has stated that the Egyptian Public Investment Corporation has approved the establishment of a commercial bank in cooperation with the Kuwaiti Real Estate Investment Group and the Saudi al-Mawarid Investment Foundation. Al-Rumi confirmed to AL-ANBA' the report in yesterday's issue of the British newspaper THE FINANCIAL TIMES that says that the Kuwaiti Real Estate Investment Group, a part of the Public Investment Corporation, will be the largest contributor to the bank's $5 million capital. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

Further on Recently Concluded Fatah Congress

Fatah Issues 'Closing Statement'

JN1108205489 Manama WAKH in Arabic 2010 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Tunis, 11 Aug (WAKH)—Fatah's fifth general congress has saluted the rallying of all the Palestinian people behind the PLO, their sole, legitimate representative.

The closing statement of the congress, which was carried by the Palestinian news agency today, says Fatah's fifth general congress stresses the historical significance of the resolutions of the 19th session of the Palestine National Council, especially the independence declaration document.

The congress, which concluded its proceedings yesterday, rejected all self-rule projects and what the closing statement calls the substitute homeland and liquidation projects seeking to consecrate occupation. The statement cites Shamir's project, emphasizing that the proposed elections can only take place in the context of an integrated and lasting settlement. These elections must be conducted in a free and democratic atmosphere and be internationally supervised.

Hailing the intifadah [uprising] and calling it the dynamo behind all initiatives which has made available the potential for the Palestinian people to realize that which they have been denied, the statement denounces all forms of terror, and more particularly state-sponsored terrorism, as practiced by Israel.

The congress stresses the need to pursue work for a just and permanent peace, based on recognizing the national rights of the Palestinian people within the framework of the international conference.

On the Arab front, the congress praises ongoing work to promote effective Arab solidarity. The statement expresses solidarity with the Lebanese people and urges that every effort be made to extricate Lebanon from its dilemma. It also calls for a consolidation of the peace between Iraq and Iran.

On the international front, the congress notes the existing relations of cooperation and friendship between the Palestinian people and the Islamic and African nations as well as the nonaligned countries and those of the socialist bloc, led by the USSR and PRC.

It praises the positive shift in the stands of West Europe, Japan, Canada, and Australia favoring Palestinian national rights.

The congress says it is perplexed by the slow pace of the Palestinian-American dialogue which began several months ago and calls on the United States to recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital. The statement notes Israel's violation of Palestinian human rights as testified by a report by the American human rights committee.

Organizationally, the closing statement points to the creation of a new organ to be called Fatah's (?general) council representing the various cadres of the movement to be charged with making decisions when the need arises.

The congress expresses its thanks to Tunisia and its president for their principled stands and for hosting the Palestinian leaders on Tunisian soil.

'Final Political Statement'

JN1208182289 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1615 GMT 12 Aug 89

["Final Political Statement" issued by the fifth general congress of the Fatah Movement in Tunis; date not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. At a stage that is one of the most delicate stages of our Palestinian people's national struggle for liberation, and at the climax of confrontation between the masses of our Palestinian people and the Israeli occupation forces—which used all its tools and powers in an attempt to liquidate our national cause, strike the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and confiscate their inalienable rights—and in light of the popular intifadah [uprising], which has entrenched its position in the conscience of the world and the calculations of international powers as a battle for national independence that is led by all our people along with the legendary steadfastness of our masses in the Palestinian camps in defense of their national cause and existence—under all these circumstances, the fifth congress of the Fatah Movement was held in Tunis from

2 to 9 August under the patronage of Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and with the warm fraternal embrace of the fraternal Tunisian Government and people.

The meetings of the fifth congress of the Fatah Movement were permeated by a democratic atmosphere, a national and organizational responsibility, and responsible and comprehensive discussion of all the problems and issues of the Palestinian people related to their national cause.

The committees of the fifth congress have studied and analyzed these problems and searched for the best solutions to them. In light of this, the congress has adopted important resolutions on all the issues and developments, foremost of which are the blessed popular intifadah, the means to bolster and escalate it, and political and organizational issues.

From the position of pride and glory, the congress discussed in detail the valiant popular intifadah of our great people, its steadfast heroes and wounded, and its righteous martyrs, affirming that the intifadah has built the wall of steadfastness and determination, constituted a turning point in the course of conflict with the Israeli occupation, and secured the possibility for the Palestinian people to achieve what they could not achieve since the 1947 partition resolution—namely, the establishment of their independent state and the protection of its national fate from loss. The congress has made all the necessary decisions in order to provide all the means required to escalate and guarantee the continuation of the intifadah.

The congress, inspired by the principles of the Fatah Movement and its history of struggle, has proceeded from the principle that the change will eventually be decided by the organized popular movement, which has a clear program, especially as through their blessed intifadah, our Palestinian people have entrenched their existence in the homeland in confronting the most serious Zionist conspiracy to liquidate their presence. Based on this, the congress has unanimously adopted a political program that has clearly defined the political stand of our movement on the national, pan-Arab, and international levels.

On the national level, the congress has debated at length the methods necessary to consolidate Palestinian national unity. It stressed the unity of our Palestinian people inside and outside Palestine, in exile, the diaspora, and the steadfast camps. The congress has greeted their firm rallying around the PLO, the leader of their struggle and their sole and legitimate representative, and their adherence to their inalienable national rights to self-determination, repatriation, and the exercise of their sovereignty in their independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

The fifth general congress of the Fatah Movement also underlined the historical importance of the resolutions of the Palestine National Council [PNC] at its 19th session, particularly the document concerning the declaration of independence. It has also authorized the Fatah Central Committee to work on all levels to implement these resolutions based on achieving the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights, foremost of which is their right to self-determination, repatriation, and the establishment of the independent Palestinian state on Palestinian territory.

The congress voiced its commitment to the Palestinian peace initiative approved by the PNC at its 19th session in Algiers and which was declared by brother President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] before a UN meeting in Geneva. The congress meanwhile rejects all autonomy plans, substitute homeland, and other liquidatory schemes to consolidate the occupation, such as Shamir's plan. The congress regards elections as normal if carried out within the framework of an integrated and cohesive program for a comprehensive and final solution. The elections should take place in a free and democratic atmosphere, under international supervision, and after the withdrawal of the Israeli forces.

While the congress pledged adherence to the principles of international legitimacy, which grant our people the right to exercise all forms of struggle, including armed struggle, to confront the hateful Israeli occupation of the Palestinian homeland, it denounced all forms of terrorism, particularly state terrorism. The congress stressed the need to continue to work tirelessly for a just and lasting peace based on our people's inalienable national rights within the framework of an international conference to be attended by the UN Security Council permanent member states as well as all the concerned parties, including the PLO, on an equal footing with the other parties.

The congress underlined the need to continue the dialogue with the Israeli democratic forces within the framework of the constants endorsed by our PNC sessions.

The congress hailed our steadfast people in our camps in Lebanon, stressing their effective role in safeguarding the independent national Palestinian decisionmaking. The congress decided to secure all forms of support to preserve them and foil the plans to disperse them.

On the pan-Arab level, the congress emphasized the need for constant work to achieve Arab solidarity as part of the overall efforts and pan-Arab resources to support the Palestine question and intifadah and attain all the major pan-Arab goals. This requires the intensification of relations with the Arab masses, the ones who have the real interest in achieving victory and the Palestinian people's national objectives.

The congress voiced its solidarity with Lebanon and stressed the need to exert all possible efforts to save it from its ordeal and to safeguard its sovereignty, Arabism, and territorial integrity.

The congress reviewed the developments that led to the cessation of the Iraq-Iran war, emphasizing the need to establish a lasting peace between the two countries. The congress praised the efforts and sacrifices that the Iraqi people and Army made to defend the Arab nation's eastern gate.

On the international level, the congress expressed appreciation for the relations of fraternity and friendship with the Islamic, African, and nonaligned states, and with the socialist states, the USSR and PRC in particular.

The congress praised with high appreciation the positive and outstanding change in the stands of the West European states, Japan, Canada, and Australia in favor of the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights manifested in the invitation extended to brother Abu-'Ammar to visit France and in the ECC statement in Madrid. The congress praised the Warsaw Pact statement that embodied the member states' commitment to the Palestinian goals and aspirations.

The congress debated at length the issue of the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue which began several months ago and expressed surprise at the very slow progress of this dialogue and at the absence of political comprehensiveness and practical rules of this dialogue, which prompted the congress to demand that the U.S. Administration recognize clearly the Palestinian people's right to exercise their right to self-determination and establish their independent state, with Jerusalem its capital, and adopt an advanced practical stand to preserve Palestinian human rights, noting that a U.S. human rights committee highlighted the magnitude of the Israeli occupation authorities' violation of the Palestinian people's rights.

The congress decided to request the U.S. Administration to abandon its biased policy in favor of Israel and adopt a neutral stand enabling it to play its role. The congress pointed out that partiality cannot serve the peace process in the required practical way and that had it not been for U.S. political, economic, financial, and military support, the continued Israeli occupation and fierce violation of Palestinian human rights, as well as the Israeli authorities' confrontation of our heroic people's intifadah and the child stone-throwers with bullets and daily killing—all this would not have been possible.

Regarding organizational issues, the organizational issue took a lengthy part of the congress' work. This is because consolidating the internal situation of any revolutionary movement, such as the Fatah Movement, and the confrontation of some negative phenomena that have accumulated throughout the past 10 years of our movement's life on the domestic and foreign levels is considered a vital and basic matter on the road of preparing to develop the best means to wage political and military confrontation. In this regard, the congress has adopted several resolutions and introduced wide amendments to its bylaws. In an atmosphere saturated with appreciation, the congress has elected brother Abu-'Ammar as commander in chief of the Fatah Movement. The congress has decided to increase the number of members of the Fatah Central Committee and Revolutionary Council to secure a wider participation of the leadership. The Central Committee will choose a political bureau from among its members. In this respect, the congress has decided to charge the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Council with choosing a number of our struggling leaders inside the occupied territories to posts in their command organizations.

Basedon the view that it is important that the cadres should participate in all political and organizational developments, it has been decided to establish the movement's general council as a new framework embracing cadres who represent the various active frameworks to adopt the necessary decisions when necessary.

The fifth general congress of the Fatah Movement addresses greetings of appreciation and gratitude to fraternal Tunisia—president, government, and people—for its principled stands and for hosting the Palestinian leadership's presence on its soil. The congress expresses profound appreciation for the efforts Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali is exerting in the service of the Palestine question and for his decision to host the fifth congress of our movement in Tunisia and among its generous people.

The congress recalls with reverence and admiration all the hero martyrs, the latest of whom was the prince and symbol of martyrs Abu-Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], who sacrificed their lives.

The congress pledged to the heroes of the great and blessed intifadah; the steadfast heroes in the lofty Palestinian camps, villages, and cities; the captives and prisoners in the detention camps; the masses of the Arab and Islamic nations; and the free and honest men in the world that the flag of struggle will continue to flutter regardless of challenges, that the march will continue to advance toward its goals, and that we will not hesitate to offer sacrifices until our people regain all their national rights and the flag of Palestine flutters over holy Jerusalem, the capital of our independent state, Palestine, the place and the land of Prophet Muhammad's midnight journey and Jesus Christ's cradle, may God's peace and blessings be upon them.

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Verily we have granted thee a manifest victory: That God may forgive thee thy faults of the past and those to follow; fulfill his favor to thee; and guide thee on the straight way; and that God may help thee with powerful help. [Koranic verse] Revolution until victory!

Revolutionary Council Named

JN1108173889 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Exceprts] The fifth Fatah congress ended its work, which began in Tunis on 3 August. It elected the members of the Central Committee and Fatah Revolutionary Council. It also endorsed the reports of the military and security committees; the bylaws, financial, and political reports; and reports of the intifadah [uprising] committee.

The 1,200 members of the congress voiced their positions on subjects under discussion in a spirit of revolutionary responsibility and out of eagerness to promote democracy, which proved the strength of the movement's unity.

The prince of the martyrs, Abu-Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] was one of the founders of the movement and the creators of the blessed intifadah for our heroic people in the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

The congress also elected by secret ballot 49 strugglers as members of the Fatah Revolutionary Council. It unanimously elected brother Brigadier General Abu-al-Hakam al-Rusan member of the Revolutionary Council and chairman of the Revolutionary Justice Commission. The following brothers won membership of the Revolutionary Council:

Harbi al-Sarsur;
Abu-'Ali Shahin;
Dr Zuhayr al-Wazir;
Fatimah Birnawi;
Sufyan al-Agha;
Umm al-Lutf [not further identified];
Umm Sabri [not further identified];
Fakhri Busaysu;
Ribhi Musa;
'Aqid 'Abbud;
Akram Haniyah;
Anis al-Khatib;
Samir Abu-Ghazalah;
Ibrahim Asad;
'Adnan Samarah;
'Azzam al-Ahmad;
Nasir al-Qudwah;
Walid Sa'd Sayil;
Abu-Dawud [Muhammad Dawud];
Lieutenant Colonel Mu'in al-Tahir;
Abu-Firas [not further identified];
Salwa Abu-Khadrah;
Lieutenant Colonel Rashad al-Kasir;
Bakr 'Abd-al-Mun'im;
[illegible]u-al-Manhal;
Maryam al-Atrash;
Hikmat Zayd;
Mahmud al-'Alul;
Khalid Musmar;
Lieutenant Colonel Fathi Madani;
Muhammad al-Madani;
'Atif Busaysu;
Haydar Ibrahim;
Jamal Muhaysin;
'Abdallah Hijazi;
Najla' Yasin;
Abu-'Ali Mas'ud;
Zakariyah 'Abd-al-Rahim.
Colonel 'Arif Khattab;
Jamil Shihadah;
Colonel 'Izz al-Din Sharif;
Dr Lieutenent Colonel 'Abd-al-Karim Nassar;
Rawhi Fattuh;
'Abd-al-Muhsin al-Za'tar;
Yahya Yakhluf;
Marwan al-Barghuthi;
Air Force Colonel Usamah al-'Ali; and
Nabil Ramlawi.

Habash Sends Congratulations

JN1108202089 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1844 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] The fifth general congress of Fatah has received a letter of greetings and congratulations from brother George Habash, secretary general of the Central Committee of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP].

The letter says: The holding of Fatah's fifth general congress was a culmination of a long, militant march expressing a nationalist Palestinian will. As the fifth general congress concludes its successful proceedings, I am gratified to extend to you warmest militant greetings in the name of the PFLP Central Committee, its Political Bureau, and all its cadres and fighters, as well as on my behalf. We are confident that this congress will mark a big step forward toward the realization of our people's goals of freedom and independence as well as the right to repatriation, self-determination, and founding the independent Palestinian state on our national soil with Jerusalem as its capital.

The PFLP, as it sends deepest greetings to comrades of the march in the Fatah Movement, is confident that your congress will prove a true boost to the intensification of our people's struggle, especially given the continuation and escalation of their glorious intifadah [uprising] inside the occupied homeland. As the PFLP congratulates you over the convening and conclusion and success of the proceedings of your congress, it shakes hands with you and wishes your militant movement further success and progress. We vow that we will stay together with our hands clasped in the context of a firm national unity and solid political foundations until all the goals of our people are realized topped by the right to repatriation, self-determination, and the establishment of the independent Palestinian state.

Fatah's Al-Hasan: U.S. Criticism 'Ridiculous'

JN1108121489 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1210 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] The Fatah Movement today announced its rejection of U.S. criticism of its final statement. Khalid al-Hasan said on behalf of Fatah that we have not signed a peace agreement with Israel, Israel has rejected our peaceful intiative, while the Israelis kill our people daily and always create an atmosphere of war in the Middle East. Meanwhile, he added, we are the ones who are denounced because of a phrase on the armed struggle. This is ridiculous, as Khalid al-Hasan put it.

In its political statement, Fatah reiterated the need to intensify and escalate armed struggle and all forms of resistance to remove the Zionist-Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, as the statement put it.

More on 'Hasty' U.S. Criticism

NC1108130889 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1205 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Tunis, 11 Aug (MENA)—Khalid al-Hasan, alias Abu-al-Sa'id, chairman of the Palestine National Council's foreign relations committee and member of Fatah's Central Committee, has stressed that the Palestinian peace program is a permanent one which has been confirmed by the resolution of the fifth Fatah congress which called on its leaders to implement it successfully, but also called on them to be cautious.

Commenting on the criticism levelled by the U.S. State Department spokeswoman against the Fatah political program, Al-Hasan told the MENA correspondent in Tunis that the U.S. stand still emanates from Tel Aviv and has not yet reached the point of neutrality necessary to an effective mediator. He expressed his belief that this is one of the facts that exist in the arena through the might of the big powers, but is not in line with reality and does not help the progress of the peace process. He added that the United States needs to be trusted by the Palestinian people.

Khalid al-Hasan went on to say: We believe that the U.S. Administration was very hasty in declaring its stand on the Fatah statement and congress outcome. He called on the United States to realize that the state of war between the Palestinian people and Israel is not over yet and that no peace treaty has yet been signed. He noted that Israel has not yet stopped killing Palestinians, that the abduction of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd has made the situation in the region explosive, that the ink with which the decisions of the Likud were written has not yet dried, and that the American people have not yet forgotten the report drawn up by the U.S. human rights committee.

He said that the United States must study the Fatah program within the context of the overall situation and not in isolation from reality, which lies not in implementing the big powers' desires but in the situation on the ground.

The U.S. State Department spokeswoman had described Fatah's political statement as a very strongly worded one and said that it does not help the process to establish peace in the Middle East.

Abu-Sharif Cited

JN1108182089 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1715 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Bassam Abu-Sharif, PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, affirmed today that the PLO remains committed to the principle of a political settlement on the basis of two states in Palestine—a Palestinian state and an Israeli state.

Commenting on Washington's negative response to the program the Fatah Movement adopted in its recent conference, Bassam Abu-Sharif said that the PLO's commitment is not tactical but is a strategic option and that the Palestinian leadership will continue along this course and continue to act in accordance with it.

Abu-Sharif said he is waiting for the five UN Security Council permanent members to adopt practical and serious measures to push ahead the peace process and to tackle the Israeli measures seeking to abort the efforts in this direction.

Commentary on U.S. Criticism

JN1208202489 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1803 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Fellow brothers: It is only natural and normal for the U.S. Administration to attack the political program issued by Fatah's fifth general congress. This is because this administration—despite the immense changes that affected the Palestinian-Israeli struggle—remains shackled by the policy of the Zionist lobby, which is hostile to the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, in particular their right to self-determination and the establishment of their free, independent state.

That the George Bush administration should attack a Palestinian political program that insists on continuing the struggle with legitimate means to wrest all the legitimate national Palestinian rights to return, to self-determination, and to establishing the Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital, is only in line with this administration's policy, which is openly biased in favor of aggressive, hegemonistic, arrogant, and expansionist Israel. Therefore, and in line with the U.S. Administration's policy which ignores the legitimate and internationally recognized Palestinian national rights, it is only

natural for the U.S. State Department spokeswoman to state that the latest Fatah Movement political program includes a campaign of slanders against Israel and words of confrontation in addition to principles and solutions—which she termed as unrealistic—instead of practical ideas for peace.

Let us see who slanders whom in this hostile U.S. statement. Let us first consider the spokeswoman's remark that the Fatah Movement's political program includes a slander campaign against Israel. We ask: Does the U.S. Administration want the Fatah Movement to commend Israel's atrocities and express gratitude for Israel's criminal policies and its aim of perpetuating the occupation so that its political program may not smack of slanders against Israel? Are these regarded as slanders against arrogant, occupying, and aggressive Israel? O gentlemen in the U.S. Administration: Does this not explain Israel's true crookedness to the world? Your attitude is strange indeed. What is more strange is that the U.S. Administration blames the Fatah Movement because its political program includes what it termed language of confrontation. It seems as if the U.S. Administration wants us to deal with Israel as a true friend with whom we had only a trifling row in a regrettable moment of anger and not as an enemy that occupied our land and sacred places and for 40 years has been working to expel our people, who are proving very inflexible.

Now, what about the U.S. spokeswoman's claim that the Fatah political program included a number of principles and solutions which she termed unrealistic? What kind of practical ideas does the U.S. Administration want from Fatah other than the Palestinian peace intitative? Did the U.S. Administration want the Fatah congress to endorse Shamir's liquidationist plan? This is unreasonable. It is unreasonable for the U.S. Administration to think that the Fatah Movement could approve of Shamir's elections plot, because this administration is perfectly aware of where Shamir's liquidationist plan could lead if allowed to be implemented in its well-known form. Then, what kind of dreams, thoughts, and illusions crossed the minds of the gentlemen in the U.S. Administration and caused them to express all this consternation toward the latest political program of the Fatah Movement?

In any case, we should not wonder because this U.S. attitude is testimony to the Fatah political program, which needs no testimonies in any case. In front of everyone, including the U.S. Administration, Fatah will exercise its political program in full, supported and backed by all the heroic Palestinan people, because Fatah is the vital fluid that courses through the veins of the Palestinian people. Fatah, which is the backbone of the Palestinian revolution, will continue the struggle with the resolve of its people and the determination of the masses of the glorious intifadah [uprising] in order to embody its political program in full, regardless of the difficulties and challenges and no matter how the retreating Israeli occupiers escalate their savage atrocities and indulge in their policy with the support of their U.S. ally. The will of the Palestinian rights and truth is stronger than the might of the unjust forces and it will inevitably triumph. The victorious intifadah will roar with Fatah's backing, and Fatah, which triumphs by the intifadah, will continue to roar, and history will put this on record.

Meeting With U.S. Slated Within 'Next 2 Days'

JN1208172889 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1600 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Fatah Central Committee member Khalid al-Hasan has announced that an official U.S.-PLO meeting will be held in Tunis within the next 2 days. The meeting will be the fourth of its kind since the beginning of the dialogue between Washington and the PLO last December. The Palestinian delegation will be led by Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh and the U.S. delegation by Ambassador Pelletreau.

Citing official sources, the Abu Dhabi newspaper AL-ITTIHAD had said that Pelletreau will ask the Palestinian side to explain certain clauses in the final statement [as heard] of the Fatah Movement's fifth general congress, particularly concerning the call for armed struggle against Israel.

Salah Khalaf on Talks

JN1308064889 Manama WAKH in Arabic 2030 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Bern, 12 Aug (WAKH)—PLO Central Committee Member Salah Khalaf, also known as Abu-Iyad, has announced that during the next official meeting within the framework of the dialogue which started between Washington and the PLO last December, the PLO will ask the United States to start discussing essential issues and finding solutions through tangible steps which can be implemented on the ground.

In an interview conducted by Bern Radio and broadcast tonight, the PLO official added that the PLO will try to make the negotiations more inclusive, and on a wider scale, delving into issues pertaining to a final, just, and comprehensive settlement of the Palestine question.

Abu-Iyad said that the dilemma in U.S.-Palestinian negotiations was because the U.S. stand insists on preserving its strategic relations with the Israeli entity.

He affirmed that on its part, the PLO offered everything for the sake of peace and supported all initiatives seeking to find a just settlement of the Palestine question.

On the results of the Palestinian fifth general congress of the Fatah Movement which was held in Tunis and which concluded last Thursday [10 August], he affirmed that the congress unanimously agreed on many issues on

which it had been previously difficult to reach agreement, as well as the Palestinian peace initiative, the [Palestine National Council] Algiers session resolutions, and the continued support for the Palestinian intifadah inside the occupied Arab territories.

The last meeting between the PLO and the United States took place at the beginning of June, 1989.

'American Source' Cited

JN1208075089 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0630 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 12 Aug (WAKH)—Press reports said here today that a very important meeting will be held in Tunis within the next hours between Hakam Bal'awi, Palestine's ambassador in Tunis, and his U.S. counterpart, Robert Pelletreau, at the request of the U.S. Administration. Citing an official source at the U.S. State Department, AL-ITTIHAD says that Pelletreau will ask the Palestinian side for a clear explanation of the call to escalate armed struggle against Israel included in the political statement issued by the fifth Fatah congress as well as the PLO's stand on the commitment to the peaceful solution of the Palestine question and the repudiation of terrorism.

The American source added that the American ambassador will also ask, during the meeting, for the PLO's answer to the U.S. Administration's request to the PLO to give the Palestinians inside the occupied territory the green light to respond to the proposal on holding elections in the West Bank and Gaza. The source said that the official answer which Pelletreau receives from the Palestinian side will define the U.S. Administration's final answer on the Fatah statement, and on whether this means that a change has occurred in the PLO's stand on the peace process. The answer might affect the continuation of the American-Palestinian dialogue.

Abu-Sharif 'Welcomed' U.S. Position on Lebanon

JN1208181289 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] The PLO today issued an urgent appeal for convening an emergency Arab summit on Lebanon. 'Arafat's political adviser, Bassam Abu-Sharif, said the PLO regrets the silence toward the crime of the 20th century being perpetrated in Lebanon against civilian citizens. Abu-Sharif added that Arab leaders are called on to convene an emergency Arab summit in order to save what has been left of Lebanon.

After indicating that the United States in the past had not opposed the continuous shelling in Beirut, Abu-Sharif welcomed the latest position of the United States, which denounced the massacres of innocent people in Lebanon and accused Syria of participating in the shelling. Abu-Sharif hoped that Washington's position will be effective this time.

PLO Denies Receiving Message From Rabin

NC1208180589 Paris AFP in English 1758 GMT 12 Oct 89

[Text] Tunis, Aug 12 (AFP)—A top Palestinian official here Saturday denied reports that the PLO had received a message from Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

"If the message was sent, it hasn't arrived yet," said Salah Khalaf, who is better known by his nom-de-guerre Abu-Iyad. He also voiced doubts that Mr. Rabin could make such a move at present.

An Egyptian weekly magazine, UKTUBAR, reported Saturday that Mr. Rabin had sent a message to Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasir 'Arafat outlining a basis for a settlement of the Palestinian question.

It cited Palestinian sources as saying they attached great importance to the letter which, while not providing encouraging ideas, nevertheless meant direct written contact between an Israeli Government official and Mr. 'Arafat.

The letter also focused on the PLO's role in elections for Palestinians in the occupied territories, the magazine said, adding that Mr. Rabin stood ready to meet a Palestinian delegation authorized by residents of the territories.

'Arafat Confers With Leaders on Lebanon Crisis

JN1308180689 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1710 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Bassam Abu-Sharif, Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, has contacted General Michel 'Awn by telephone from Tunis to inquire about the deteriorating situation in Lebanon, to express his grave concern over the systematic destruction of Lebanon by the Syrian artillery, as he put it, and to exchange viewpoints on the necessary political moves to stop the destruction.

Radio Monte Carlo has learned that Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has held large-scale contacts on Lebanon from Tunis with a number of the Arab states' leaders and a number of the ambassadors of the permanent member states of the UN Security Council.

Paper Previews 'Arafat's Visit to Amman

JN1308064589 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 13 Aug 89 p 1

[Report by JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Suhayr 'Ubaydat]

[Text] Amman—Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat is expected in Amman later this week for talks with His Majesty King Husayn on the latest political developments in the Palestinian, Arab and international scenes and on coordination and consultation between Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

'Arafat, chairman of the PLO and president of the state of Palestine, will also formally reopen the offices of the Palestine National Fund (PNF), the "finance ministry" of the PLO, in Amman after a three-year closure, informed sources said.

The government announced last week that it had agreed to a request that the PNF, which moved its headquarters to Abu Dhabi in 1986, be allowed to reopen in Amman.

'Arafat is expected to brief the king on the outcome of a general congress of the mainstream PLO faction Fatah in Tunis last week. Resolutions adopted by Fatah showed that the biggest PLO faction had endorsed 'Arafat's strategy for peace with Israel, based on a two-state solution and thus strengthened 'Arafat's position against hardliners who oppose his moderate approach.

King Husayn will brief 'Arafat on Jordan's moves towards advancing peace efforts and on his talks last week with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly, who paid a one-day visit to Amman after visiting Israel and Egypt.

There are also strong indications that Egyptian President Husni Mubarak might visit Jordan this week and a possibility that the king would hold a three-way mini-summit with the Egyptian and Palestinian leaders.

The main focus of the talks is expected to be means to press ahead with peace efforts, which have come to a rest with PLO and Arab rejection of Israel's plan for Palestinian elections in the occupied territories in its present form. The PLO and the Arab states have said that the plan could be acceptable only if it is part of an overall process leading to a comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian problem, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In the meantime, the issue of "armed struggle" loomed into the center-stage in the Middle East equation after the U.S. criticized the political program adopted by Fatah at its congress last week.

The Palestinian news agency, WAFA, issued a statement summarizing the Fatah resolutions but moderating the phrasing of a reference to "armed struggle."

"The congress affirmed (Fatah's) commitment to the principles of international legitimacy which give our people the right to practice all forms of struggle, including armed struggle, to confront the hateful Israeli occupation," the WAFA report said.

The original resolution adopted by Fatah said the Palestinian movement would continue to "intensify and escalate armed action and all forms of struggle to eliminate the Zionist Israeli occupation of our occupied Palestinian land."

A senior PLO official in Amman, asked to comment on the issue, said: "No Palestinian leader, 'Arafat or anyone else, has ever said the PLO was abandoning its military struggle, which is a right under international legitimacy for people under occupation."

Muhammad Milhim, a member of the Executive Committee of the PLO, noted that the PLO had always reaffirmed its right, "among others, to pursue armed struggle as a means of resistance against the occupier in the occupied territories."

A member of the Fatah Central Committee, Khalid al-Hasan, rejected the U.S. criticism of Fatah's political strategy and said it was an indication of continuous American bias in support of Israel.

The rephrased Fatah statement carried by WAFA was apparently in response to U.S. State Department remarks that "the (original Fatah) statement's derogatory rhetoric on Israel, its tone of confrontation and violence and its preference for unrealistic principles... are unhelpful."

However, Israel brushed aside the WAFA report and continued its assault on the Fatah resolutions. An Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman described the resolutions as a step backwards and unacceptable even to the dovish members of the Israeli Cabinet.

"It is completely meaningless," contended a spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Ministry referring to the WAFA report.

The American attitude came under heavy attack in the Gulf press Saturday.

Washington's criticism of Fatah, said Qatar's AL-SHARQ daily, "reaffirms that (the U.S.) is still looking solely after Israel's security and ignoring Palestinian rights."

"America has disregarded all positive points contained in the program and the fact that the Palestinian stand cannot ignore armed struggle in confronting Israeli rejection of all peace initiatives," AL-SHARQ added.

The Abu Dhabi-based AL-BAYAN daily said Fatah's stand "is shared by the majority of Arabs and Palestinians."

Kuwait's AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM said the U.S. was "disturbed" by Fatah's reference to armed struggle as means to acheive peace and establish a Palestinian state. "It seems the American Administration was expecting the Tunis congress participants to move to Tel Aviv to express allegiance (to Israel) while Palestinians were falling victims to injustice," it said.

Similar sentiments were expressed in several other Arabic- and English-language newspapers in the Gulf.

PFLP-GC Statement on Meeting With Hizballah

JN1108165689 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. An official source at the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] has made the following the statement:

Yesterday, Thursday, 10 August 1989, a delegation from the Hizballah leadership led by Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli met with a PFLP-GC delegation led by Secretary General Ahmad Jibril. The two sides reviewed the political situation in the region in general and in the Lebanese arena and the occupied territory in particular. The two sides paused at the plots concocted by the Zionist and imperialist enemy and its executive tools in the Lebanese arena against Lebanon, its nationalist forces, and the national Palestinian presence in the Lebanese arena. They also discussed the ways to confront and abort these plots.

The two sides affirmed the need to continue and escalate armed struggle against the Zionist entity, affirming, at the same time, that the Lebanese and Palestinian nationalist forces' alliance with Syria and the Islamic Republic of Iran is an inevitable condition to continue national steadfastness in Lebanon.

An atmosphere of sincere fraternal understanding prevailed at the meeting. The two sides' views on the other issues were similar.

Hamas Issues Resistance Statement No 46 11 Aug

JN1108175089 (clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1635 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has issued statement No 46 in which it praises our people's struggle and sacrifices and cautions them against the conspiracies that are being concocted against them, particularly against the elections for which terrorist Shamir is calling. Hamas describes these elections as a mirage and reaffirms its stand rejecting this malicious plan, the only objective of which is to control the intifadah [uprising] and wipe it out.

In its statement No 46, Hamas movement calls on all Muslims to revive the status of the al-Aqsa Mosque in the hearts of the sons of the nation through sermons and the holding of conferences and seminars on the anniversary of setting fire to the captive mosque to impress on the nation the perils the Zionists pose to Islam and its followers.

Hamas also calls on all the Arab countries to shoulder their responsibilities toward our sons who are working in their countries and to open their markets to Palestinian products. It also calls on all humanitarian bodies and international human rights organizations to work seriously for ending the tribulations of, and halting the repressive measures against, the detainees in Zionist jails.

In its statement No 46, the Hamas Movement calls on the sons of our people to close their ranks and unite their stands. It calls on mosque preachers in Palestine to devote the sermons on Friday, 18 August 1989, to speaking about al-Aqsa Mosque and about the need to hold many religious rites there.

Hamas calls on our people to be completely alert to the enemy's trickery and vicious conspiracies against them.

The Hamas Movement in its statement expresses pride in the heroic merchants who have boycotted and continue to boycott Zionist products and calls on them to continue this boycott. It calls on the striking arms to follow up this issue.

In its statement No 46, Hamas also calls for comprehensive strikes on the following days:
—Tuesday, 15 August 1989, on the anniversary of the Khaybar battle [waged between Muslims and Jews in city of Khaybar in early days of Islam].
—Monday, 9 September 1989, on the anniversary of the setting on fire of the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque.

The Hamas Movement also calls for fasting on Ashura day on Saturday, 10 Muharam, 1410 Hegirah, corresponding to 12 August 1989.

Concluding its statement, the Hamas Movement calls on the striking arms and our patient people to escalate the intifadah and direct fierce blows against the Zionist enemy soldiers and Zionist settlers.

South Asian Regional Affairs

Talks Under Way on Setting SAARC Meeting

BK1208082089 Hong Kong AFP in English 0749 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Dhaka, Aug 12 (AFP)—A senior official of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was quoted Saturday [12 August] as saying consultations were on to reconvene a postponed meeting of the group's foreign ministers.

Abul Ahsan, secretary general of the Kathmandu-based association, said in an interview with a local news agency that Pakistan, SAARC's current chairman, has launched "vigorous efforts" to convene the meeting. Pakistan was working on specific dates for the meeting and Sri Lanka, whose boycott had scuttled a meeting in June, never "showed any diminishing interest in the SAARC or never wanted to desert it," Mr. Ahsan said.

He added: "There is a renewed reaffirmation on the part of each member state of the commitment to SAARC.... Each of them wished the meeting to take place as soon as possible."

The ministerial meeting had been set for Islamabad in June to finalize the agenda for the next SAARC heads of government summit in November, but was postponed after Colombo decided to boycott it to protest the presence of Indian forces on its territory.

SAARC, founded in Dhaka in 1985, is presently headed by Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and groups Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Earlier, Mr. Ahsan told reporters here that efforts to convene the postponed meeting "are making headway" and that dates at the end of August or early September were being considered.

Asian diplomats based in Dhaka said Sri Lanka assured Bangladesh Foreign Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud during his recent visit there that "it would not do anything which may harm the interests of the SAARC."

In Colombo, officials said Friday that Sri Lanka's participation in the meeting depended on a settlement of the dispute with New Delhi over the pullout of Indian troops from the island. "We should know by tomorrow whether we are going to attend or not," a senior Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry official said Friday, adding that part of the problem was rescheduling.

The SAARC secretary general told the news agency that the association "could not settle the political problems arising among the member countries, simply because it was not a political organization."

Egypt

'Abd-al-Majid Voices Concern Over Lebanese

NC1308130889 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1123 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Cairo, 13 Aug (Mena)—[Foreign Minister] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has stated that Egypt is following closely and with extreme concern the regrettable deterioration in the security situation in Beirut and the haphazard shelling of the two sides of the capital. This shelling has claimed hundreds of lives and displaced thousands of Lebanese.

Dr 'Abd-al-Majid explained that the security situation deteriorated further following the statement issued by the Arab foreign ministers, who are members of the higher tripartite Arab committee. This committee represents the Arab consensus on the need to end the Lebanese tragedy.

Dr 'Abd-al-Majid expressed the hope that the tripartite committee will continue its efforts in accordance with the resolutions of the emergency Arab summit conference held in Casablanca in May, because finding a settlement for the Lebanese crisis is a joint Arab-Lebanese responsibility.

Dr 'Abd-al-Majid said that the Egyptian stand on the Lebanese crisis has always been based on a firm conviction that the cornerstone for any solution of this crisis lies in the withdrawal of all the foreign forces from Lebanese territory. This will enable the Lebanese, regardless of their religious, political, and ideological affiliations, to settle their problems without foreign intervention and not in favor of one Lebanese community at the expense of the other. This line has been expressed by President Muhammad Husni Mubarak on several occasions.

Dr 'Abd-al-Majid added that Egypt urges all the Lebanese communities to live up to their national and historic responsibility and to firmly confront the political, economic, and social challenges endangering their independence, unity, and sovereignty.

Abu-Talib Returns From 'Successful' U.S. Visit

NC1408081789 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0643 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] Cairo, 14 Aug (MENA)—General Yusuf Sabri Abu-Talib, minister of defense and war production and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, returned to Cairo early this morning after a 10-day visit to the United States.

Upon arriving, Abu-Talib said that he will submit a detailed report to President Husni Mubarak on the outcome of his visit to the United States. He noted that he has an oral message from President George Bush to President Mubarak in reply to Mubarak's message.

Gen Abu-Talib described his visit to the United States as very successful, adding that he met senior U.S. officials and increased his knowledge of the U.S. Administration. Abu-Talib said that he had sensed the interest of the U.S. side in Egypt's Middle East role and in increasing the cooperation with Egypt in all fields.

Abu-Talib remarked that he held meetings with U.S. President George Bush, Defense Minister Richard Cheney, and members of the U.S. congressional committees on defense and foreign affairs, which he described as "very successful."

Abu-Talib said that he held a detailed discussion with the U.S. secretary of defense on cooperation between Egypt and the United States in the military field. He also discussed the issue of military assistance to Egypt with members of the congressional committees on defense and foreign affairs.

Senior Armed Forces commanders and U.S. Ambassador to Cairo Frank Wisner met Abu-Talib at the airport.

It is worth noting that Abu-Talib's talks with U.S. officials covered a number of topics of common interest, particularly the situation in the Middle East, furthering peace in the region, combating international terrorism, and seeking ways to ban the production of the weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear and chemical weapons, as well as bilateral relations.

In his talks with the U.S. secretary of defense and senior military officials in Washington, Abu-Talib discussed the supply to Egypt of a new shipment of the advanced multipurpose F-16's, the timetable for the delivery of the consignments of the same planes which have already been approved, and the time of arrival of the third shipment of those planes.

Modernization of the Egyptian naval forces, supply of modern units to those forces, and programs for the joint production of the U.S. tank "M-1A1" in Egypt, were also discussed during the talks.

Editorial Assesses Visit

JN1208141689 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 10 Aug 89 p 7

[Editorial: "Strategic Facts"]

[Text] During the visit [to Washington] by General Yusuf Sabri Abu-Talib, minister of defense and war production, a number of facts that may be considered cornerstones of the Egyptian strategy have been accentuated. These facts help one understand the framework within which the official Egyptian leadership is moving at various levels. These are as follows: For Egypt, the peace option is a strategic one; therefore, all Egyptian efforts are directed toward achieving peace and development. As a consequence, Egypt opposes the proliferation

of missiles in the Middle East and calls for an international agreement to ban arms, including nuclear, chemical, and bacteriological weapons. Egypt neither possesses nor intends to produce chemical weapons. If Egypt is concerned about maintaining a reasonably trained and equipped military force, it is because this is necessary for its direct bearing on the development process and because strong and stable Egypt, by virtue of its location, role, and capabilities, is a guarantee for stability in the region. The defense minister's visit to Washington provided an opportunity to underline Egyptian-U.S. friendship, which is based on full appreciation of the economic and military aid the United States is providing to Egypt and the possible greater growth of cooperation between the two countries, especially in backing the efforts being exerted by the Egyptian leadership to overcome the economic problem and build a firm base of prosperity through reclamation of new lands, supporting national industry, and encouraging investment in Egypt to realize these goals.

The Egyptian people do not forget friends who help them in times of need and who truly assist them in laying the foundations of their development. However, they are fully aware that this development, first and foremost, is achieved by their own efforts and by making the necessary sacrifices in the present so that the fruits can be reaped in the future. The Egyptian people know very well that friendship based on equality and respect for national interests is one that can survive, last, and progress. However, for Egyptian-U.S. relations to be a model of positive, firm, and fruitful relations, there remain necessary steps along the road of friendship. These steps are demanded by the international and regional circumstances on one hand and by the local circumstances on the other.

Sudan

Peace Talks With SPLA To Begin 'Next Week'

AB1208155589 Paris AFP in English 1314 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Doha, Aug 12 (AFP)—Sudan's military government will begin talks with the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) "next week," a top junta member has told a leading Qatar weekly in an interview published Saturday.

Junta Vice-President al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih said the talks would be held in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, where the SPLA is based, adding that the Khartoum government was after a "permanent ceasefire."

"Our main objective is to bring about permanent peace and not just a truce," Brigadier-General Salih told AL-RAYAH. He also said that former Interior Minister Mubarak Abdallah al-Fadil was still "fleeing" and being sought.

Thursday, the only paper allowed in Khartoum since the June 30 coup, the ARMED FORCES daily, said investigations had begun into alleged economic and administrative malpractice by ousted Premier al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and members of his government.

The coup leader, Lieutenant-General 'Umar al-Bashir, has given top priority to dealing with such alleged malpractice and to reaching a peace settlement with Colonel John Garang's SPLA, which has been fighting for six years to free mainly Christian and animist south Sudan from domination by the Moslem north.

On relations with Ethiopia, Brig-Gen Salih repeated that the junta was ready to help work for peace between Addis Ababa and rebels of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front.

Former Supreme Council Vice President on Trial

EA1308164389 Khartoum SUNA in English 1030 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Khartoum, 13 Aug [dateline as received]—The trial court of former vice-president of the dissolved Supreme Council, Idris al-Banna, began yesterday. Al-Banna was accused of fraudulance and dishonesty.

[Passage indistinct] the chairman of the committee investigating Al-Banna read the accusation paper, accusing Al-Banna of benefiting from his post to his own interest.

The paper indicated that Al-Banna had attended, along with other Sudanese delegations the Arab Peoples Congress held in Tripoli, Libya, in 1985, at which a committee was formed to assist Sudan to face the disasters and drought.

In the framework of this assistance, the accusation paper went on to say, Libya had granted Sudan of two diggers to combat the problem of thirst in western Sudan, but Al-Banna had seized one of these diggers for his own benefit by registering it in the name of an illegal society which he established from numbers of his relatives. [sentence as received]

Kuwait

U.S. Criticized for Position on Fatah Congress

LD1208100889 Kuwait KUNA in English 0811 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Kuwait, Aug 12 (KUNA)—AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM newspaper Saturday [12 August] assailed the United States for criticizing the recent political statement of the Fatah Movement and lamented at the same time that Arabs have failed in two decades to make the U.S. take positive action on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The U.S. Administration on Thursday criticized the Fatah political program apparently for referring to the Palestinian people's right to use armed struggle for ending Israeli occupation of Palestine.

The Fatah statement, issued at the end of a weeklong congress of the movement in Tunis, also rejected Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's election plan and immediately drew fire from Tel Aviv for that.

AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM cynically remarked in a front page editorial that the U.S. obviously expected the Fatah conferees to move from Tunis directly to Tel Aviv "to offer allegiance and repentence."

It noted that while the U.S. denies Palestinians their right even to speak of armed struggle, it turns a blind eye to Israel's savage measures against the occupied Palestinians.

The paper, however, blamed the lack of realism in the U.S. Mideast policy on the Arabs themselves because they've allowed their interests and attitudes towards Palestine and Lebanon to clash and their policies to contradict each other.

Another Kuwaiti daily commented editorially on the Fatah statement and defended the Palestinian movement's decision to keep alive the armed struggle option against the Israeli occupation.

English-language daily KUWAIT TIMES found Fatah's reasoning all the more logical against the backdrop of a series of Israel's stubborn policies.

It noted that as 'Arafat renounced terrorism last year, the Jewish state indulged in state terrorism and while the Palestinian leader recognized Israel's right to exist, Tel Aviv continued to reject the PLO as the legitimate representative of Palestinians.

"Fatah which believes in 'struggle until victory' cannot be expected to renounce its raision d'etre or a weapon of its last resort," the paper said.

The KUWAIT TIMES also criticized the United States for joining Israel in finding faults in Fatah's statement. Washington's attitude, according to the paper, "only helps Israel which has no intention to call a halt to its terrorist pursuits in the Middle East."

U.S. Human Rights Stand Assailed

LD1308095989 Kuwait KUNA in English 0801 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Kuwait, Aug 13 (KUNA)—A Kuwaiti paper Sunday [13 August] regretted the American stance toward human rights which it said is politicized when it comes to the Palestinians' rights.

Daily AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM said that Washington is specially sensitive against criticism directed toward Israel over its massacres of Palestinian in the occupied Arab lands.

(?The paper) then cited Washington's backing to Israel against the Arabs, to Afghan mujahidin against Soviet-backed Kabul and to Turkey against Bulgaria over the Turkish minority issue.

The daily charged that the U.S. can never sympathize [words indistinct] issues regardless of its pretention to the contrary in the Afghan and Turkish questions.

Editorial on 'Biased' U.S. Policy

JN1308092289 Kuwait AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM in Arabic 11 Aug 89 pp 1, 23

[Editorial: "The Valuable American"]

[Text] In his interview with journalists in his office in the White House, President Bush said: "I hope I am open-minded enough to talk and to try every diplomatic channel possible to release the American hostages held in Lebanon. I would not have done my duty if I did not handle the situation in this way," President Bush added, saying: The lives of each one of these people is too valuable to me to just bury my head in the sand and not view issues in this highly complicated part of the world with some insight.

We do not doubt that every American has a special place in the President's heart, mind, and feelings as he is the prime person responsible for his citizens' safety and security and his people's prosperity and progress.

However, what we find strange is that others do not share the importance and protection in the President's heart and mind that the Americans have. Very often, the President's eyes, mind, and heart are closed completely or are terribly and intentionally deficient of understanding and deduction, not for any specific reason but because the White House does not want to understand or interact with events it considers trivialities. Just as the life of every American is too valuable to President Bush for him to bury his head in the sand, what we hope for is that the lives of others will be at the same level of importance, be a reason to raise the man's head, and be

reason enough for insight and knowledge of the reasons as to why the nine Americans were kidnapped and for whose sake hundreds of Lebanese and Palestinians fall for no reason and with no justification.

It is unfortunate that the contradictory, ambiguous, and sharply biased pro-Israeli U.S. policy be one of the reasons creating crises in the Middle East, one of which is the hostage crisis. The official U.S. policy hardly ever coincides with the facts. Most often, it has double standards and is distributed unjustly so that Israel gets the largest share.

Had the U.S. President, who is confronting his first crisis at the beginning of his term, dealt with the region's crises as he is dealing with them today, there would not have been a hostage crisis. Issues would have progressed much more easily and simply. The great complications in the Middle East were created by the United States due to its ambiguous policy, multiple stands, and loss of credibility. It tells the Arab leaders what it does not tell Israel. It asks Israel to do what it cannot do itself.

The interesting point in the hostage crisis is that Israel wants to polarize international support and sympathy, while the United States lurks behind the curtains to enter secret negotiations to exchange hostages for frozen Iranian assets to preserve its reputation as a superpower. It tries to be open-minded concerning a small crisis and blocks its heart, eyes, and mind in the large-scale crises.

'Anxiety' Expressed Over Lebanese Violence

LD1308140189 Kuwait KUNA in English 1302 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Kuwait, Aug 13 (KUNA)—The Kuwait Government Sunday [13 August] voiced utmost concern and indignation at the vicious cycle of violence in Lebanon, urging all Lebanese parties to undertake their historic responsibility and stop the blood-letting.

Acting government spokesman and Planning Minister Dr 'Abd-al-Rahman al-'Awadi said following a cabinet weekly session today, chaired by acting premier and foreign minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, that the government was watching with great concern the tragic events in sisterly Lebanon.

"The cabinet," he indicated, "while expressing utmost anxiety and indignation at the deplorable incidents, appeals to all Lebanese brethren and parties to bear their historical responsibility and stop this bloodletting."

The council, Al-'Awadi added, also appeals to all Arab countries, represented by the tripartite committee assigned to tackle the Lebanese crisis, to continue sincere efforts for extricating Lebanon from its present dilemma and extend every assistance that would contribute to reinstatement of peace and tranquillity, revive its institutions and maintain its national and territorial integrity.

PDRY

Al-'Attas Addresses Foreign Relations Committee

EA1308171089 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Brother Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, member of the Politburo and chairman of of the Supreme People's Council Presidum, has underscored the importance of developing and strengthening parliamentary relations with sisterly and friendly states within the framework of Democratic Yemen's desire to develop relations with those states in a way which serves the joint interests of their peoples . This was said during his opening of the regular meeting of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Supreme People's Council, convened this morning.

At the meeting, brother Al-'Attas spoke on the tasks facing the Foreign Relations Committee of the Supreme People's Council and the council's other standing committees and the need to stimulate their activities and the implementation of their plans to ensure the continual development of the work of the Supreme People's Council, which is the supreme tool of state authority.

He praised the role played by the Foreign Relations Committee in developing its relations with a number of parliaments of sisterly and friendly states and its participation in numerous parliamentary meetings, affirming that it has performed a strengthening and development role in a way which has contributed toward the implementation of our country's foreign policy.

Brother 'Ali Ahmad al-Sallami, member of the Presidium and chairman of the committee, also spoke at the meeting and pointed out the role being played by the Foreign Relations Committee and that (?guidelines) of its future work were being drawn up in such a way as to strengthen the role of the Supreme People's Council and the presidium.

At the meeting, the committee examined the issues on its agenda.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Receives Arab League's Ibrahimi

LD1308200689 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] The custodian of the two holy places, King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, received this evening at his office at al-Salam Palace Mr Lakhdar Ibrahimi, the Arab League assistant secretary general and the emissary of the Tripartite Higher Arab Committee on Lebanon. The audience was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister.

Yemen Arab Republic

North, South Discuss Radio, TV Cooperation

EA1208080389 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 10 Aug 89

[Text] Negotiations between the deputy ministers of culture and information of the two parts of the homeland ended today in Sanaa. They were chaired by Faruq al-Hakimi, deputy minister of culture and information in the southern part of the homeland, and 'Ali Ibn-'Ali, the deputy minister of information and culture in the northern part of the homeland. The heads of the culture and information institutions of the two parts of the homeland also participated.

During the final session, the minutes of a meeting between the radio and television organizations of the two parts were signed on behalf of the southern part of the homeland by brother 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, director of radio and television, and for the northern part by brother 'Ali Salih, director general of radio and television programs on Yemeni national history and cultural matters, the meeting of Yemeni intellectuals and writers, the production of investigative television features, and the holding of Yemeni or Arab literary and intellectual seminars in the two parts.

The minutes provided for the exchange of programs and dramas, including an agreement to engage in joint productions in this field, from the wealth of Yemeni national culture, history, and literature of Yemeni unity; as well as of other programs, such as special children's programs to inform Yemeni children about the geography of the homeland; special documentaries on ancient Yemeni civilization and history, reflecting the extant landmarks of civilization, and also investigative television features on historical areas, sites and tourist spots in the two parts.

The minutes provided for consultations on the production of joint monthly and weekly radio and television programs, which will be implemented in the future.

Participants also signed the minutes of a meeting between the ANA and SABA' news agencies. They were signed by brothers Muhammad al-Hubayshi, director general of the ADEN NEWS AGENCY, and Yahya Salih al-Shawkani, director general of the SABA' NEWS AGENCY. It was agreed that the two agencies will be connected by a direct link in which to send and receive local news stories in the two parts, and that the two agencies will coordinate in sending their news to the news center of the nonaligned states.

The two agencies will issue pamphlets on various intellectual, technical, and economic developments, and unification activities between the two parts, and exchanges of visits between journalists and artists, with the aim of strengthening and developing joint action and exchanging expertise between the two agencies. The minutes included an agreement that the two agencies will cooperate in any new field suitable for joint action that might arise in the future.

These minutes were signed within the framework of the efforts by the political leadership in both parts of the homeland to strengthen the links of mutual coordination and cooperation in all activities with the aim of the restoring Yemeni unity.

Brother Faruq al-Hakimi, the deputy minister of culture and information, and his companions, have set out by road for Ta'izz.

Construction Minister Leaves for Cairo Meetings

JN1108182689 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Brother Engineer Muhsin 'Ali al-Hamdani, minister of municipalities and housing, left for Cairo this evening heading a delegation to participate in the first meeting of the ministers of construction and housing of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] countries, which will start their meetings in the Egyptian capital tomorrow, Saturday.

The brother minister said in a statement to SABA' NEWS AGENCY that our country's delegation will present the meeting with a working paper on the construction and housing sector and possibilities of cooperation and coordination among the ACC countries in light of the resolutions of the Supreme Council and Ministerial Committee and approved strategies of the ACC.

He pointed out that the construction and housing field in the ACC countries is one of the fields through which opportunities of cooperation could expand to serve the joint interests of the ACC countries, promote the role of building and construction, as well as depend on Arab skills and potentials to prevent the presence of competitor foreign companies.

'Aziz Charges Syria Plans East Beirut Invasion

JN1308201689 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1932 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Baghdad, 15 Aug (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has commented on the forces of the Syrian regime invading the Suq al-Gharb district [in Lebanon] by saying:

Mounting a large-scale military operation to occupy Suq al-Gharb with a view to invading the East Beirut area means that the Syrian regime has now embarked on an extremely serious and suspect plan to destroy Lebanon and dismember it. Allied with the Syrian regime in this anti-Arab scheme, added the minister, are Zionism and other parties including the Iranian regime.

In a statement to INA, 'Aziz added: The behavior of the Syrian regime constitutes brazen defiance of inter-Arab relations and shows a determination to defy the will of the Arab nation that has called for a resolution of the Lebanese crisis based on brotherly dialogue.

This rash behavior warrants not only condemnation and denunciation, but also a firm, practical Arab stand against a conspiracy that targets the Arab destiny itself, 'Aziz said.

Paper Cited on Syrian 'Occupation' of Lebanon

JN1408093489 Baghdad INA in English 0915 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] Baghdad, Aug. 14, INA—AL-JUMHURIYAH daily for today has said that the Syrian forces presence in Lebanon have no longer any description except that of occupation.

In an article today it added that there was no justification for the presence of the Syrian forces in Lebanon but that of further violation of Lebanon's independence and creation of convenient circumstances for implementing the scheme of partition.

The paper queried in its article about what the Syrian forces have done as they were seeing the Zionist forces occupying parts from south Lebanon up till today.

AL-JUMHURIYAH added that realities affirm that the Syrian troops have fought against all Lebanese parties one after another and fought the Palestinians in several battles beginning with Tel al-Za'tir and ending with Tripoli till they pushed them away from there. The paper said, thus, killing and destruction were the major task undertaking by the Syrian forces in Lebanon.

AL-JUMHURIYAH daily held a comparison between the Syrian and the Zionist roles in Lebanon by saying that all realities proved that the number of the Lebanese killed by the Syrian forces amounted at double of those killed by the Zionists where it appeared that the Syrian role was complementary to the Zionist role in the game of killing and ruining and even exceeding it.

The paper pointed out that the Lebanese Council of Ministers had taken a decision providing for pulling of the non-Lebanese armed forces from Lebanon on July 14, 1982.

The paper concluded that continuity of the Syrian forces presence in Lebanon was not legitimate as entering of those forces into Lebanon was illegitimate as well. [sentence as received]

'Urgent Arab Summit' Needed

JN1308112789 Baghdad INA in English 0930 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Baghdad, Aug. 13, INA—AL-JUMHURIYAH daily of Baghdad today called for an urgent Arab confrontation to the Syrian regime. The daily editorially said here that this confrontation could materialize through an urgent Arab summit to adopt and implement serious and decisive resolutions.

It disclosed that the Syrian regime worked for ousting the Arabs from any dealing with the Lebanese crisis and accepted the formation of the tripartite Arab committee at the Casablanca summit only to avoid adopting stronger and clearer decisions than those adopted.

AL-JUMHURIYAH added that the Syrian regime does not want neutral and decent settlement for Lebanon that preserves its unity and independence and restores to its security and stability.

The daily questioned why the Syrian regime charges the committee set up from three Arab leaders and entrusted by an Arab summit with shortsightedness, deviation and impartiality while this regime itself endorsed the formation of this committee.

It pointed out that the Syrian regime was after a settlement to the crises in Lebanon in collusion with the Zionist entity and the Iranian regime, a settlement that would partition Lebanon into shares among them.

U.S. Behavior on Hostages, Iran 'Unprincipled'

JN1308125189 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1100 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Baghdad, 13 Aug (INA)—The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH today compared the game involving the U.S. hostages who were held in Iran as a cover to conclude suspect deals in the heat of the battle on the one hand and the game involving hostages held in Lebanon to peddle suspect designs that are hostile to the Arab nation.

In one of its articles, the paper says: This game is no longer concealed to those participating in it or to intermediaries, be they Arab or non-Arab.

The writer of the article affirms that this game looks like the only possible way to provide assistance as well as financial and technical aid to a country that continues to be condemned for international terrorism and for kidnapping, holding, and killing hostages; that has continued to pursue an aggressive and expansionist policy in the region; and that is condemned on both the domestic and international levels for various forms of human rights violations.

The article affirms that Iran is no longer capable of concealing its material and armaments cooperation with the United States and the Zionist entity regardless of the number of hostages it holds in captivity, and the United States cannot hide its unprincipled behavior vis-a-vis terrorism, hostage-taking, and human rights despite its claims to the contrary. Such gimmicks will only end when world public opinion displays its disgust with those involved in it and with the intermediaries.

The article points out that in the new episode in this hateful game with bribers and bribe-takers, roles are being distributed in both Iran and the United States among hard-liners and moderates in the hope that Iran will be, in one way or another, provided with something to bolster its arrogance and encourage it in its antipeace stance.

The article recalls what former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's administration did on 21 January 1981, finalizing a huge financial deal to reward the Tehran rulers for holding hostages in captivity in the U.S. Embassy in Tehran for 444 days. This deal was consummated in the heat of the Iraq-Iran war when the Iranians were displaying their well known insistence on continuing the war and rejecting peace offers. The objective was to supply the aggressive Iranian war machine with an additional power, which soon turned into rubble at the hands of the Iraqis.

Column on U.S.-Iranian Contacts

JN1408102089 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 12 Aug 89 p 2

["Spotlight" column by Sabri: "Another Deal?"]

[Text] Whether U.S.-Iranian contacts have already started as reported by the French paper LE CANARD ENCHAINE, or whether they will be held in the next few days as reported by the Iranian paper TEHRAN TIMES, what is certain and obvious is that these contacts not only seek to normalize relations between the two sides but also to conclude a new deal of no less importance than the deal on the Tehran U.S. Embassy hostages, or the scandal deal, Irangate.

Observers do not have to exert too much effort to deduce that the contacts that have taken place, or will take place between the two sides, carried by veteran or nonveteran mediators, are no more than an operation of intensive bargaining over several issues and stands.

It goes without saying that the Iranian side, which holds the hostage card in its hands, will work to obtain the most prohibitive price the United States can pay although the latter continues to affirm that it refuses to pay a ransom for the release of its hostages.

What happened in the two previous deals, the U.S Embassy hostage deal and Irangate, was that the previous U.S. Administrations had paid more than one ransom. It gave Iran money in the first deal, and supplied it with weapons in the second. From this premise, the Iranian regime, which excels in grasping and exploiting opportunities, will resort to playing the hostage card in the open, and it has indeed started to exploit this card since the very first day of the eruption of the crisis. This regime also knows very well that the United States not only wants to obtain the release of the hostages but also seeks what is more important, particularly following Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit to Moscow and the many agreements he concluded with it.

The question that persistently comes to mind is: Can one guarantee that once Iran's conditions are met the hostages will be released? Can one guarantee that hostage taking will not recur and that the Iranian regime will desist from playing the hostage-taking game, bargaining, and blackmail through the militias that are affiliated to it in Lebanon, or elsewhere?

Past experience has shown that submission to the Iranian regime's conditions and to its blackmail could have further encouraged it to continue on the course of terrorism and blackmail as one of the methods to attain its political objectives.

The Iranian regime adopted this method with more than one international party and in more than one incident. This has encouraged it to ask this time for a ransom of $5 billion.

If the Iranian regime ever gets paid $5 billion for the release of the hostages, this will encourage many others to carry out terrorism and kidnap hostages so long as terrorism is rewarding and its results are more than guaranteed!

Of course, this is not a call to carry out terrorism.

Paper Reports POW's Dead; Comment Refused

TA1308050489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0400 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Excerpts] THE SUNDAY TIMES newspaper in Britain says the Israeli Government has notified the families of two soldiers captured by Hizballah in February of 1986 that both are dead. More from Jerry Lewis in London:

Today's edition of THE SUNDAY TIMES said that the Israeli Government had concluded that the Israeli soldiers in the hands of Hizballah are dead, and that they had both died as a result of their wounds at the time of their capture. [passage omitted]

Israeli intelligence agents had hoped that by kidnapping Shaykh 'Ubayd they could force Hizballah to make an exchange. However, THE SUNDAY TIMES added, the government now believes that one of the missing men died of his wounds 15 minutes after the ambush, and the second died hours later. [passage omitted]

Security officials in Israel told the paper that they believe neither Iran nor Hizballah were aware Israel knew that two of its missing soldiers were dead. A third Israeli still missing, however, an Air Force navigator, is according to THE SUNDAY TIMES, believed to be still alive. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0400 GMT on 13 August identifies the security official as the army spokesman, reporting his statement that "Israel does not address information from unauthorized sources." The spokesman added that "our soldiers are considered to be alive unless proved otherwise."]

'Reliable' Source Cited

TA1408083089 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 14 Aug 89 p 1

[Excerpt] A reliable diplomatic source in Washington says that according to information obtained by Israel, the three soldiers held by Hizballah were alive several months ago, when the last signs of life were received from them.

Judging by this information, THE SUNDAY TIMES report does not match the data which Israel has and on which it supports its demand for the release of the soldiers in return for Shaykh 'Ubayd. [passage omitted]

IDF Spokesman Interviewed

TA1308104689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1000 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Interview with army spokesman Brigadier General Efrayim Lapid by Mark Weiss; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Lapid] We don't want to refer to any information related with the POW's and the missing soldier from the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. It is one of the most delicate issues of Israel and the IDF.

[Weiss] How do you think such a story came about?

[Lapid] I don't know how it came about, but I know that from time to time, and very frequent, there are stories and pieces of information concerning Israeli POW's published in Arab media and Western media. We have to see this piece of information as a part of the psychological warfare that is carried out nowadays.

[Weiss] You don't think these stories could possibly be based on leaks?

[Lapid] As I said, I don't want to refer to the information which was published. We regard our soldiers as alive unless we have proof otherwise.

[Weiss] So, as far as Israel is concerned, efforts to release the soldiers will continue at this moment?

[Lapid] Of course. The efforts of the IDF and the State of Israel started the minute we had no contact with our soldiers on February 1986, and from that time on, all the efforts—both on operational level and on intelligence level—are in full volume and we check every piece of information in every way.

[Weiss] What was the last piece of proof Israel had that the soldiers were in fact alive?

[Lapid] I said and I say once again: We don't want to have public debate about this delicate issue. I can assure you that we do our utmost. We involve the families, we see the families as our real partners in that process.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 13 August in a report by military correspondent Roni Daniyel quotes Gen Lapid as saying "that even if Shaykh 'Ubayd said in his interrogation what THE SUNDAY TIMES claims he said, which is not at all certain, it might be additional information, but under no condition would it be unequivocal evidence." Daniyel said that "misleading and deceptive information is an integral part of the extended negotiating process."]

Rabin Reportedly Sends Message to 'Arafat

NC1208085089 Paris AFP in English 0850 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Cairo, Aug 12 (AFP)—Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has sent a mesage to Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasir 'Arafat, outlining a basis for a settlement of the Palestnian question, the Egyptian weekly UKTUBAR reported here Saturday [12 August].

Palestinian sources told the magazine they attached great importance to the letter which, while not providing encouraging ideas, nevertheless meant direct written contact between an Israeli Government official and Mr. 'Arafat.

There has been no independent confirmation of the report.

The letter also focused on elections for Palestinians in the occupied territories and the PLO's role in them, the pro-government magazine said.

Mr. Rabin stood ready to meet a Palestinian delegation authorized by residents of the territories, the letter reportedly said.

Rabin: Report 'Totally Unfounded'

TA1208131989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin totally denies a report by the Egyptian paper UKTUBAR claiming that he has sent an urgent message to PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat. Mr Rabin stated that the report is totally unfounded. According to the Egyptian paper, the message allegedly conveyed to 'Arafat dealt with the elections in the territories and the PLO's role in the negotiations, among other things.

Shamir, Arens, Pickering Discuss Issues

TA1308164689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1605 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Report by political correspondent Arye Golan]

[Excerpts] Thomas Pickering, formerly the U.S. ambassador to Israel and currently his country's ambassador to the United Nations, has arrived in the Middle East in the framework of his world tour in anticipation of the September UN General Assembly session in New York. [passage omitted]

Here in Jerusalem, Pickering held a 1-hour meeting with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, and later a longer meeting with the prime minister. The issue on the agenda was the hostage affair. Yitzhaq Shamir said that Iran can have an important part in their release; it has great influence over developments in the Shiite sector.

Another issue was the peace process. We are still waiting for the Palestinians' answer, said the prime minister. Egypt can be instrumental in composing the Palestinian delegation that would temporarily represent the Palestinians in preparation for the implementation of the Israeli peace initiative. Ambassador Pickering promised to raise the point with the Egyptians.

Foreign Minister Arens also has expectations from the Egyptians. He told Pickering: President Mubarak is taking action to promote the peace process, and we know it.

The Syrians' activities in Beirut were also raised at the talks in Jerusalem. Syrian gunfire at the civilian population in Beirut, said the foreign minister, is a dangerous precedent. The Syrians are shelling targets without any consideration for the rules accepted by the civilized world, and there is no one to stop them.

The prime minister said in the meeting: It is sad to see how a capital is being ruined while most of the world remains silent.

Arens on Hostage Crisis, Relations With U.S.

AU1108204789 Vienna WOCHENPRESSE in German 11 Aug 89 pp 34-35

[Interview with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens: "We Will Be Adamant"; date, place not given]

[Text] [WOCHENPRESSE] The hostage-taking of Shiite leader Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd has triggered very negative reactions in the United States. According to the latest surveys of the U.S. television network ABC, the majority of the U.S. citizens think that the Israeli action was a mistake. Are you worried about this?

[Arens] Of course, I am worried. I only hope that public opinion will change with time because Israel and the United States will be adamant toward terrorists and those behind them. And they are not willing to give in to them. I believe that in the near future those men who call themselves "God's Party" will no longer take so many hostages. I hope that public opinion, especially in the United States, will realize this.

[WOCHENPRESSE] Not only public opinion turns away from Israel but also influential friends of the Jewish state, for example, Robert Dole, leader of the Republicans in the U.S. Senate. He said: "A little more sense of responsibility on the part of Israel would be refreshing." What do you say to this?

[Arens] It is, of course, true that Senator Dole is a good friend of Israel. Therefore, we in Israel deplore such statements made by him all the more. However, we believe that precisely the fight against terrorism demonstrates a sense of responsibility. We understand, of course, the pain and the fears of the relatives of the hostages whose lives are in danger. However, I believe that the anger of all righteous people should be directed against the terrorists and not against us who fight against terrorists.

[WOCHENPRESSE] Do you really still believe that the prisoners will be exchanged, that is, Shaykh 'Ubayd and your Shiite prisoners on the one hand and the Israeli and foreign prisoners on the other hand?

[Arens] I do hope so. However, one thing should be made clear. Shaykh 'Ubayd is not a simple Hizballah soldier as presented by the media, but a top-level leader from the ranks of a gang of criminals. Thus, he is an important pawn for us, and we hope that we will be able to achieve the release of all hostages in Lebanon in this way.

[WOCHENPRESSE] Would it not have been better to brief the Western allies beforehand, although Henry Kissinger says now that this would not have been good for the United States because it would have thus become an accessory? Still, in principle, should you not have discussed the matter with the United States?

[Arens] This is a very complicated question if it refers to military operations. We will certainly have talks with U.S. representatives after the present situation has somewhat calmed down. But I do not believe that these talks will result in a coordination of military operations beforehand. This would produce several highly complicated problems.

[WOCHENPRESSE] At present, the point is whether the threatened states should negotiate with shadowy groups of kidnappers or with governments that are allegedly behind them, in concrete terms, with Iran. Or does Iran not share the responsibility for actions of the Hizballah?

[Arens] There is no doubt that Iran has the greatest influence on the Hizballah. This so-called "God's Party" is not only financed by Iran, but also directed by Tehran. The Syrians also have a considerable influence on the Hizballah because this group is operating on Lebanese territory which is under Syrian control.

[WOCHENPRESSE] But your tactics have not produced any result so far....

[Arens] Oh yes, it has. One of the results is that the United States has suddenly found an official contact and the Iranians have admitted that they really have influence.

[WOCHENPRESSE] Do you call this a success?

[Arens] Oh yes, I do. For years there was nobody to talk to. Nobody was there to be threatened (with reprisals)—except for this phantom of the Hizballah.

[WOCHENPRESSE] If Iran tells the Hizballah, "Release the hostages, we are serious!" what will happen?

[Arens] This remains to be seen. There are subgroups within these terrorist groups. Who knows, one subgroup might say: "We will not accept any orders from Hashemi-Rafsanjani (Iranian president), but only from somebody else in Iran." But I do not believe that this will happen. The postponement of U.S. Professor Cicippio's execution clearly shows that the terrorists received the message. And this message came from Iran, possibly also from Damascus.

[WOCHENPRESSE] Syria has a large part of Lebanon under its control. Can anything happen there without the explicit consent of Damascus?

[Arens] I do not know enough about this.

[WOCHENPRESSE] The Hizballah not only demands the release of Shiite prisoners, but also of the Palestinian who was responsible for the latest attack on an Israeli bus. Would you also release him?

[Arens] The answer is no, categorically no.

Shamir Voices Sorrow Over Lebanese 'Genocide'

TA1408123289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has said that today's incident in Ramallah is a ruthless attack which symbolizes the ongoing war against us, a war that futilely hurts people. The terrorists must know that they will be caught and punished, and that Israel will ultimately overcome the uprising in the territories. Our correspondent Avraham Ben-Melekh notes that the prime minister made these remarks in a meeting with journalists in Jerusalem at a bar mitzvah ceremony for 150 Jewish children from Hungary.

He added that genocide is now taking place in Lebanon in front of the entire world, but that the superpowers and the international community are incapable of putting an end to it. According to him, Israel is currently plagued with worries, which is why it cannot do much about Lebanon. Nevertheless, Israel is sorry and has been prodding the superpowers to take action to cease the killing.

Asked to comment on Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef's words that it is dangerous to go on trips in Judaea and Samaria, the prime minister said there are dangers on the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway; what is more, it is dangerous to be a Jew, and not just in Eretz Yisra'el.

Arens Interviewed on Lebanon, U.S.-PLO Talks

TA1408045989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0405 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens by political correspondent Arye Golan—live]

[Text] [Golan] Good morning, Minister Moshe Arens.

[Arens] Good morning.

[Golan] Yesterday you and Prime Minister Shamir expressed concern over events in Lebanon, and the heavy shelling by Syria of a civilian population. Who do you think should stop the Syrians from carrying out these attacks?

[Arens] Look, in addition to the awful human tragedy, I believe that 1,000 civilians have been killed there over the past few months by Syrian shelling. Besides, the Syrians have also set a precedent by acting as though they can violate all the rules accepted by the civilized

world in their actions in the Middle East, and carry on with impunity. I believe an effort, spearheaded by the international community, should be made to stop this.

[Golan] Yet this phrase, the international community, is very generalized, amorphous.

[Arens] The international community primarily consists of the large countries, the superpowers. I have no doubt that if they bring pressure to bear on the Syrians, they will be able to stop them. The trouble—and the tragic thing—is that over the past few months, throughout this shelling of civilians in Beirut, no such pressure has been applied. I have talked to a number of foreign ministers on various occasions, asking, suggesting, demanding, and telling them that for their own sake it is important that such pressure be applied to put an end to this tragedy. Perhaps in light of the exacerbation of this tragedy in the last few days they may brace for some action. At any rate, we will take action on the political level to obtain such an outcome.

[Golan] Minister Arens, let me now ask you something else, related to an issue that was broached yesterday at the cabinet session: Fatah's resolutions of last week. Do you think it is possible to continue to promote the Israeli peace initiative despite these decisions?

[Arens] No doubt about it. Our initiative is totally divorced from the PLO. Our intention is to reach a dialogue with the Arab countries and with the elected representatives of the Arab population of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District. The resolutions adopted by Fatah simply prove something which we have always maintained, namely that the PLO—contrary to arguments that have been made and the way it has been trying to present itself—has not turned more moderate. We said that the organization's deeds, rather than its words, must be tested. Well, the actions have not changed, and it seems now, some time after our original warning, that the statements have also resumed their old tone.

[Golan] Yes, and it seems this matter will be discussed today as the U.S.-PLO dialogue resumes in the form of a meeting between Ambassador Pelletreau and the PLO leaders in Tunis. Minister Arens, would you expect the U.S.-PLO dialogue in Tunis to end today?

[Arens] No. I do not want to and cannot entertain such expectations. After all, this ultimately depends on the Americans. Nevertheless, I believe that in view of the extremist declarations emanating from Fatah at its latest meeting, we can sense a certain awakening on the U.S. side as well.

[Golan] Is that so, even though some commentators believe that the important thing is not really Fatah's concluding resolutions, but the fact that the 1,000-odd deputies in that conference reportedly endorsed 'Arafat's political path?

[Arens] As I said before, that terrorist organization must ultimately be judged by its actions, not by its statements. The fact is that it continues to deal with terrorism. This has recently been manifested primarily in actions against the Arab population of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District. That organization has been carrying out horrendous acts of murder here day in and day out. As we saw in Fatah's convention, the talk too is not all that different from the actions. This is a terrorist organization for all intents and purposes. It cannot contribute a thing to peace. In fact, it is currently the main obstacle to peace in the region.

[Golan] Minister Arens, I would like to pose two more questions to you on other issues. Regarding the Shaykh 'Ubayd affair, will you favor taking measures against THE SUNDAY TIMES correspondent who published the report yesterday that the two Israeli soldiers—Alshekh and Fink—are no longer alive?

[Arens] With your permission, I would prefer to express my opinion on the matter when the issue is brought up for discussion in the proper forums.

[Golan] And will it?

[Arens] I do not know, but if it is, they will hear my opinion.

[Golan] Now to internal Likud affairs: As a Likud leader and the chairman of the Likud secretariat, what is your opinion on the announcement issued by Ministers Sharon, Levi, and Moda'i that they are planning a meeting of their central committee supporters, thereby actually renewing their struggle?

[Arens] I have not heard about such a declaration. To the best of my knowledge Moda'i is currently abroad.

[Golan] According to reports, he was consulted over the telephone in an effort to reach coordination.

[Arens] Either way, I believe that any action that would result in heightened tension within a party that is currently united, scoring successive successes and political victories, would be a bad thing at present. We are currently busy preparing for the Histadrut elections. I see no point or justification in engaging in internal disputes when in fact there are no differences of opinion in principle. This cannot add anything.

[Golan] Thank you very much, Minister Arens.

[Arens] Thank you very much.

[Golan] Good morning.

Car Bomb Accomplice Abducted After Blast

TA1308184589 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Here is a report just in: The Israeli security forces and the South Lebanese Army's security apparatus abducted the accomplice of the driver of the car bomb in south Lebanon immediately after the bomb exploded. Our correspondent in the north Moti Eden reports that the accomplice is a resident of the Shiite village of Markaba, near the Israeli border. He had recently been living in Beirut, where he was recruited to Hizballah. He hosted the driver of the car bomb in his home, then set out with him on the operation. Our correspondent points out that the driver and his accomplice had tried to attack Israeli army soldiers the day before they detonated the car bomb.

Khan Yunus Girl Killed; Incidents Reported

TA1208191089 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] A 3-year-old girl from the Khan Yunus refugee camp was killed by a bullet this evening during an incident involving the stoning of soldiers. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is looking into the circumstances of the incident. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 12 August adds that "two women from Khan Yunus were wounded and hospitalized by soldiers' fire" in the incident.]

Two Arab residents were cruelly murdered in two different places in Samaria today. The police believe there was a criminal background, but Arab residents said the two were murdered on suspicion of collaborating with the Israeli authorities. Our correspondent Victor Nahmias reports that approximately 95 Arabs have been murdered by Palestinians since the outbreak of the intifadah [uprising].

At the Qezi'ot detention facility yesterday, IDF soldiers managed to rescue two prisoners from other inmates who wanted to kill them.

An Arab youth died of a heart attack in the Samaria village of al-Yamun today. Villagers said this took place when an IDF force was chasing students who were throwing stones. Army sources, however, told our correspondent that an initial investigation indicates that an IDF force did not operate in al-Yamun today. The sources emphasized this is not the first time that Arabs have tried to attribute death by natural causes to the IDF.

11-12 Aug Incidents Updated

TA1308125489 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 13 Aug 89 p 3

[Report by Rasim Ibrahim, Ayelet Mazor, and ITIM]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Twenty-two Gaza Strip residents were wounded by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] gunfire during the weekend, including three men aged 70 to 80. The IDF spokesman has said that he has knowledge of five wounded only.

According to the sources, disturbances were staged in most refugee camps in the Strip, including Jabalyah, Rafah, al-Shati', al-Nusayrat, and al-Burayj, and in several Gaza neighborhoods. IDF soldiers were forced to fire at rioters, wounding—according to the sources—22 people, including a 4-year-old boy from Jabalyah, who was shot in the leg. Nine residents were wounded in the Rafah refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip.

Curfews remained in force during the weekend in the al-Shati' and al-Mughazi refugee camps. Arab sources reported that residents of these camps were gathered in schools and interrogated by the security forces. [passage omitted]

4 Injured in Firebomb Incident Near Ramallah

TA1408072289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0700 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] Four Israelis, apparently tax collectors, were injured this morning when a firebomb hit their car in Ramallah. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the four received first aid on the site and were later transferred to the hospital. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] imposed a curfew on the area, and has begun searching for the perpetrators of the attack.

Our correspondent Rina Matzliah has been told by the staff at Hadassah Hospital at Mount Scopus, where the injured were admitted, that two of them sustained moderate to serious injuries, while the other two were only slightly hurt.

Street Closed; Curfew Imposed

TA1408120989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that Major General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, the commander of the Central Command, has ordered the closure until further notice of Falastin Street in Ramallah, the site of this morning's firebomb incident. He also ordered all the shops on the street closed and all access alleys barricaded. Gen Mordekhay also ordered the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] commanders in the area to take all the operational and intelligence measures necessary to capture the perpetrators of the act.

The entire area, as well as the adjacent Qaddura refugee camp, are under curfew.

The IDF has confiscated videocassettes from two Arab reporters who filmed the site of the attack and the IDF commanders who arrived at the scene of the action. Official army sources reported that this was done because the tapes were filmed in a closed military zone and because the reporters failed to obtain a permit from the IDF.

King Reportedly Undertakes 'Moves' on Lebanon

JN1308114089 Abu Dhabi Domestic Service in Arabic 0930 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Informed sources in Jordan have said that His Majesty King Husayn of Jordan sent an urgent message to King Hassan II of Morocco on the issue of holding an extraordinary Arab summit soon to tackle the deteriorating situation in Lebanon.

In today's issue of AL-ITTIHAD, the paper quoted these sources as saying that the message carried by 'Adnan Abu-'Awdah, political adviser to the Jordanian monarch, to Rabat yesterday contained a renewal of the proposal calling on the warring Lebanese factions to hold a roundtable meeting in the Jordanian capital to discuss ways to resolve the Lebanese crisis and hold urgent contacts with both Damascus and Baghdad to establish an immediate cease-fire in order to pave the way for political efforts to solve the crisis.

In his message to the Moroccan king, King Husayn also proposed the formation of an Arab peacekeeping force whose nucleus would consist of units drawn from most Arab armies, envisaging that a battalion from each Arab state would form this nucleus. This force would be placed under a unified military command affiliated to the Arab League. The proposal also calls on the Arab tripartite committee to continue its efforts in this regard.

These sources indicated that the Jordanian monarch informed King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, and Iraqi President Saddam Husayn of the urgent Jordanian moves on Lebanon.

Editorial on 'Savage' Shelling

JN1308104489 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 13 Aug 89 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "What is Behind the Savage Shelling"]

[Text] The savage artillery and rocket shelling to which Beirut and a third of the Lebanese territory were exposed yesterday has reached a degree which forebodes a calamity and overburdens those with a live conscience in the region and all over the world. This shelling, which is an extension of similar shelling which took place a few days ago, has resulted in killing tens of innocent civilians and wounding hundreds of others, to the extent that it reached the shelters where people took refuge.

What is certain is that events in Lebanon represent a challenge to all moral and humanitarian values. It is as if they are intended to stab the entire Arab presence in the back and make it appear as though it is unable to contain a tragedy which is destroying life in an Arab country with Arab hands! Perhaps what is also intended is to absorb the world resentment against Israeli terrorism in the occupied territories by horrifying world public opinion over what goes on in Lebanon in a way that shows the aggressive Israelis as more merciful to the Palestinians than the Arabs who are killing each other in Beirut with their own hands.

Thus, it can be said that the crazy escalation of the shelling in Lebanon is no more than a mechanism which has been selected to defame the Arabs before the world and to replace world concern over Israeli practices in the occupied territories by considerable concern over what goes on in Lebanon. Thus, Israel would be relieved, albeit temporarily, of the world pressure to which it is being exposed. At the same time the Israeli image would be improved before the world, albeit temporarily also!

Unfortunately, this mechanism has started to bear fruit. It has succeeded over the last few days in placing the fighting in Lebanon on the front pages of the world press, after the Palestinian question and Israeli practices in the occupied territories had been the focus of reports in that press!

If we recall now the arrangements proposed by Jordan in the emergency Casablanca summit to restore stability to Lebanon, we will find that those arrangements would have been sufficient to save Lebanon from what it is presently going through.

In any case, attention must be paid to the fact that if the Arabs do not begin taking genuine measures to halt the massacres in Lebanon, we cannot rule out the possibility of other forces taking matters into their own hands and leaving the Arabs behind. It would then be difficult to predict the consequences.

'Responsible Source' Cited on Currency Reserves

JN1308111189 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 13 Aug 89 pp 1, 15

[By Nayif al-Ma'ani in Amman]

[Text] A responsible source has affirmed that Jordan's foreign currency reserves are more than 25 times what they were last May.

In an exclusive interview with SAWT AL-SHA'B, the source said that the Kingdom's reserves amount to $700 million compared with $20 million-30 million last May.

The source clarified that this large foreign currency reserve has accumulated due to the monetary measures followed by the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] to build up substantial reserves of hard currency. During the past 2 months, the CBJ saved approximately $300 million as a result of its strict measures to preserve hard currency, despite its intervention in the monetary market every time the need to do so arose and despite pumping tens of millions of dollars into the banking system to meet the urgent requirments of the citizens, especially concerning students studying abroad and opening documentary credits for the trade sector to cover its imports.

The source continued: The organizational measures of the banking system dictating the merger of Petra Bank, the Jordan Gulf Bank, and a number of other financial institutions led to the collection of hard currency from black market traders and currency speculators and returning it to the banking system.

He said that the Arab aid to Jordan to enable it to overcome its problems had led to saving cash amounts of foreign currency exceeding $200 million. In addition, some sisterly Arab countries have decided to transfer monthly sums of hard currency to Jordan exceeding $50 million monthly, which will bring Jordan's reserves of these currencies up to more than $1 billion by the end of the current year.

He added that this reserve will enable the CBJ to intervene in the market whenever it wishes through circulating large amounts of foreign currencies to control the dollar exchange rate against the dinar. This calls for anticipating stability in the dinar, finally fixing its price, and retrieving its strength and well-being. With this situation, it is expected that the dollar price will fall to the rate it was before the monetary quake that shook Jordan.

Qatar Grants $30 Million

JN1308100089 Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 10 Aug 89 p 1

[Text] Amman, AL-BAYAN—Jordanian Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Ibn-Shakir, accompanied by Foreign Minister Marwan al-Qasim, returned to Amman from Doha yesterday afternoon following a brief visit during which he conveyed a message from King Husayn of Jordan to Shaykh Khalifah Ibn-Hamad Al Thani, amir of the State of Qatar.

Informed sources in Amman indicated that Qatar granted Jordan $30 million and promised to place an interest-free deposit in the Central Bank of Jordan to help stabilize the exchange rate of the Jordanian dinar, which has recently begun to improve.

Al-Sharif Zayd visited Kuwait on 8 August. During the visit, he conveyed a message from King Husayn to Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad Al Sabah. He also held talks with Kuwaiti officials on bilateral relations and current Arab issues.

A responsible source in Amman said on Monday [7 August] that Jordan has received $380 million from Arab states to help it overcome its economic crisis. The following is a breakdown of the amounts received: $200 million from Saudi Arabia, $70 million from the United Arab Emirates, $40 million from Kuwait, $50 million from Iraq, and $20 million from Oman.

Dinar 'Remains Stable'

JN1108111389 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 11 Aug 89 pp 1, 19

[Text] Amman—AL-DUSTUR—The dinar exchange rate against foreign currencies remains stable in the exchange market represented by Jordanian banks. The dollar rate of 815-820 fils has been stable for a week. Meanwhile, demand for foreign currencies has eased, resulting in a supply exceeding demand and giving an indication of dinar firmness against other currencies.

The Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] yesterday specified an official dollar rate of 586.3-580.1 fils to cover imports of essential commodities included in the list of priorities previously issued by the CBJ and the needs of students abroad.

Banking sources yesterday indicated that the banks covered all merchants' imports not included in the list of essential commodities at a dollar rate of 820 fils. This was confirmed by a number of merchants whose credits were covered by banks.

There has been a clear inclination toward a stability in the prices and calm in the exchange market after the CBJ intervened and pumped large sums of dollars into banks.

REUTER cited bankers yesterday as saying that the CBJ, which has a reserve of foreign currencies exceeding $400 million, intends to intervene regularly to stabilize the dinar.

The bankers said that CBJ Governor Muhammad Sa'id al-Nabulsi has also informed them that the dual exchange rate system is a temporary measure and that the objective is to unify the official and the free market rates.

A banker cited Al-Nabulsi as saying that the dual rate system is a temporary solution and that the CBJ is now considering a unified dinar exchange rate in both official and free markets.

He cited the CBJ governor as saying that the CBJ will continue to intervene in the market and asking banks to cooperate in efforts to stabilize the dinar.

Another banker cited Al-Nabulsi as saying that the CBJ reserve of foreign currencies has risen to $400 million from $20 million several months ago.

Al-Nabulsi said that Iraq promised to pay regular monthly istallments of $15 million to settle its over $450-million debt to Jordan.

Reportage on Weekend Battle Over Suq al-Gharb

Amal Radio Announces Offensive

NC1308101089 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 0930 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] The Lebanese nationalist and progressive forces have begun the battle to liberate the homeland from Michel 'Awn's clique, which has plunged Lebanon into a war that has brought only more destruction, death, and devastation.

At dawn today, the forces of Martyr Kamal Junblatt launched a comprehensive attack on the Suq al-Gharb front, supported by all the nationalist forces. The vanguards of the offensive managed to achieve their scheduled targets according to plan number one. The battles are continuing.

During the first hours of the offensive, the battles were as follows:
1. At 0900 today, Hill 888 and Qal'at al-Hisn were liberated.
2. The 10th Brigade, which assumed responsibility for the Suq al-Gharb front under the command of Colonel Makhkhul Hakimi after Brigadier General Zayid Harb refused to participate in a battle that is doomed to fail, has been annihilated. Within this context, the units and defenses of Battalion 101 commanded by Major Charles Shikhani, Battalion 102 commanded by Major Mark Brahimian, and Battalion 103 commanded by Major Tawfiq Milhim have been annihilated.
3. At 1100 today, the nationalist forces perfected their control of the area of Hotel Kamil and the hotels in Suq al-Gharb. They also completed the combing and the liberation of Suq al-Gharb front.

The nationalist forces are now pursuing 'Awn's cliques and remnants in the direction of al-Qammatiyah and (Khazzanat al-Qurtubawi) after annihilating two support companies that set out toward al-Qammatiyah via the Bsus-Bdadun road.

Warehouses Reportedly Seized

NC1308132389 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1240 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Excerpts] Following the military developments on the Suq al-Gharb front, Michel 'Awn issued an immediate order to form a second defense line along Duhur B'abda, al-Fayyadiyah, al-Jumhur, and Kafr Shima. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, nationalist military sources have affirmed that the Lebanese nationalist forces are still advancing on the mountain front, where battles are taking place near Hajjar Hotel after Suq al-Gharb neighborhoods have been captured and purged. A platoon from the 10th Brigade is negotiating to surrender in al-Qammatiyah. The al-Kahhalah axis has been the subject of intensive military pressure, as a result of which al-Khazzanat and al-Qurtubawi warehouses have been seized.

Suq al-Gharb Said Captured

NC1308121089 Paris AFP in English 1150 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Excerpt] Beirut, Aug 13 (AFP)—Syrian gunners poured metal and fire onto Lebanese Christian positions again Sunday which saw some of the fiercest fighting since the civil war began here 14 years ago, Western military experts said.

The Syrians, using large caliber artillery, 240-millimeter mortars and multiple rocket launchers targeted the B'abda region, headquarters of the government of Christian Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn, and al-Yarzah, site of the Defense Ministry.

The Syrian shelling concentrated in a region east of Beirut, in the central al-Matn mountains, covering a radius of 25 kilometers (16 miles) and five kilometers (three miles) wide, the military experts said.

The area—which makes up the Christian suburbs of al-Hadath-Kafr Shima, B'abda and al-Yarzah—is under the control of Gen 'Awn, whose forces face Syrian troops in the nearby upper al-Matn sector.

It is also home to the Lebanese Army which maintains most of its barracks and weapons depots there.

"It's like a thunderstorm that doesn't stop pealing," a resident of predominantly Muslim West Beirut said. "I wonder if it's not easier just being under the shells."

Syrian troops backed by their Lebanese Muslim allies also launched an offensive Sunday against Gen. 'Awn's positions along the Suq al-Gharb front 10 kilometers (six miles) southeast of here, pro-Syrian sources said, adding that the forces executed a multipronged attack but failed to capture the town.

Pro-Syrian Druze militia leader Walid Junblatt meanwhile said his forces had captured Suq al-Gharb but there was no independent confirmation of the claim. Sources close to Gen. 'Awn confirmed the attack but said the Syrian forces were repulsed.

The 35,000-strong Syrian Army contingent in Lebanon in recent days has sent extra troops and armor to front-line positions surrounding the Christian region, security sources said.

"The red lines must be broken," a pro-Syrian politician said. Failure to do so would reinforce Gen. 'Awn's hand, he noted.

"Our aim is to inflict military defeat upon him," he added. "We don't want to invade the Christian regions."

Shells, which began raining on Beirut at 0300 GMT, also hit Christian East Beirut, police said, but there were no immediate casualty figures.

The deafening sounds could be heard as far away as the coastal city of Sidon 43 kilometers (27 miles) south of here, a Sidon resident reached by telephone, said.

Residents in bomb shelters and also reached by telephone said the shelling was the worst since Gen. 'Awn announced on March 14 his intention to drive the Syrian forces out of Lebanon.

Gen. 'Awn's troops have responded by shelling Beirut's Shiite southern suburbs where Syrian gunners are deployed and the Druze mountain areas, correspondents reported. [passage omitted]

Amal Appeal to Army Soldiers

NC1308103789 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 0927 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] O valiant soldiers who have taken the oath to be loyal to Lebanon and to defend its sovereignty and territory, we are aware that you are courageous heroes who do not fear death. We also know that you do not fear martyrdom in defense of the homeland in the battle of honor. However, what you must know is that the battle in which Michel 'Awn wants you to die is not one for the defense of the homeland nor is it the battle for which you have vowed to sacrifice yourselves.

O soldiers of the Lebanese Army, Michel 'Awn wants you to sacrifice your blood and lives as the price for the battle of his madness, ambition to attain the presidency, and his suspect links.

O valiant soldiers, you are never the target of the nationalist fighters' gunfire or shells. You are only required to get out of the battle. We join hands with you to build a new Lebanon now that 'Awn's adventure has destroyed it for the ninth time, as he promised. Let us join hands to unify and reconstruct the homeland. May you live long. May Lebanon live united, free, and independent. [Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic repeats this item several times, interspersed with martial music]

Amal Appeal to 'Kinfolk'

NC1308120389 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1125 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] To our kinfolk in the eastern area: 4 years have elapsed since the tripartite agreement. Which was the first serious plan to end the war and which opened the door to building a unified Lebanon over which the banners of peace would fly. One year has elapsed since the date for holding presidential elections and the contacts that took place at the time to open the constitutional door to Lebanon's salvation.

Our kinfolk in the eastern area, the lives that have fallen and the property that has been destroyed and burnt could have been saved had the tripartite agreement been implemented at the start or if the presidential elections had been held in accordance with the agreements that accompanied the tripartite agreement. The Casablanca summit resolutions finally came as a door opened to salvation, which they slammed shut. Then came the alleged slogan of the battle of liberation by this conceited military man who has usurped the leadership of the eastern area and then thrust Lebanon into the whirlpool of the war of destruction and blood that has not stopped.

Our kinfolk in the eastern area, the way to end the war and to establish internal peace among the Lebanese is still open. The downfall of Michel 'Awn is the key to the salvation of Lebanon. The battle of salvation which has been initiated by the Lebanese nationalist forces on the Suq al-Gharb front at dawn today is only the beginning of a battle to remove the obstacle that has prevented the two sectors of the homeland from meeting and that has prevented the unity of Lebanon. The downfall of Michel 'Awn is the means, but the end is the restoration of the homeland's unity and the establishment of a Lebanon of justice, equality, and fraternity among all Lebanese of all communities. It is not required that one community triumph and another be defeated. What is required is that Lebanon triumph over an individual who has utilized the arsenal and the Army to serve his madness and personal ambitions. What is required is that the movement of all communities toward a new Lebanon should triumph over a conceited military clique. What is required is that the soldiers and officers of all brigades, all ranks in all areas, and all communities should triumph over the man who wanted to turn the Army into a ladder to achieve his personal goals and serve his suspect foreign obligations, which are hostile to Lebanon's interests. What is required is that a dialogue on a formula for a future Lebanon be opened among all the intellectual, cultural, party, religious, and political figures.

Our kinfolk in the eastern area, brother officers and soldiers in the eastern area, it is for all of this that the nationalist forces have been compelled to resort to the last remedy. Their hands are extended to you—the hands of fraternity, of affiliation with the homeland, of the will to rebuild Lebanon together, united. Until we meet again soon.

Army Counterattack 'Failed'

NC1308153089 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1430 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Nationalist military sources have made the following statement to our radio: This morning, groups of the joint forces attacked the positions of 'Awn's army on the Suq al-Gharb front and liberated the Qal'at al-Husn, Hill 888, al-Mujawqalah building, al-Furn, and al-Matabikh. The nationalist forces are still purging the battle

area from the remnants of the elements of the 'Awn army. The nationalist forces captured a number of al-Yarzah army officers and soldiers.

The 'Awn army tried to carry out a counterattack this afternoon against the positions of the joint nationalist forces. But the attempt failed desperately, and the Army, which suffered many casualties, retreated. The fighting is still continuing with various types of weapons.

Observers have paused before the statement which was issued by the guidance directorate of the 'Awn command, which claimed that the battlefield in Suq al-Gharb has been purged. But the statement then said that the 'Awn forces were still pursuing, which it called, the remnants of the attacks. This contradicts what the statement said regarding the purging of the battlefield.

PSP Forces Return 'to Base'

NC1308180289 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1630 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] In answer to the destructive war which Michel 'Awn has been launching against the Lebanese people since 14 March and in implementation of the instructions of Walid Junblatt, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party [PSP], units of the Popular Liberation Army—Martyr Kamal Junblatt Forces—staged raids against the factional army's positions and lines in Suq al-Gharb and Beirut.

A statement issued by the PSP stated the following:

1. In the early hours of Sunday 13 August 1989 three units of the Popular Liberation Army launched raids on the lines of Ra's al-Jabal, al-Khazzanat, al-Hayy al-Gharbi, 'Ayn al-Sayyidah, Kayfun, and Qal'at al-Husn. The units penetrated deep into the front, destroying a number of fortifications, tanks,'and vehicles and purging a vast area. Our forces killed 35 officers and soldiers and wounded over 100 others. After completing their mission, our forces returned to base.

2. On the morning of Sunday 13 August 1989 a combined unit of the national front forces raided the factional army's positions in Ra's al-Nab' and the museum in Beirut. The combined force purged a number of buildings, inflicting scores of casualties in the enemy's ranks.

Our losses in the two operations are 8 martyrs, 17 wounded, 2 tanks, and 1 armored personnel carrier.

News Conference Canceled

NC1308150289 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1415 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Walid Junblatt, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, has canceled a news conference scheduled at 1400 today, during which he was to announce the caputure of Suq al-Gharb.

Loss of Suq al-Gharb Denied

NC1308104389 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1020 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] An official military source has denied reports by certain information media in West Beirut about alleged Syrian penetration of the Suq al-Gharb front. He stressed that a large number of the Syrian and Palestinian attackers were killed or injured. He called on the people not to heed preplanned statements that are aimed at undermining morale in the free areas. He called on the Lebanese to watch for the communiques issued by the Army Command.

Syrian Attack Said Foiled

NC1308085989 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0847 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] The Lebanese Army today foiled a major Syrian offensive on the Suq al-Gharb front, inflicting a large number of deaths among the Syrian ranks. A large number of Syrian bodies still litter the battlefield. Perhaps this offensive explains the destructive violence that covers the east areas from Suq al-Gharb up to Kasrawan Heights.

Lebanese Army 'Mopping Up'

NC1308141289 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1315 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] The indisrciminate Syrian bombardment is continuing against all the eastern areas. Meanwhile, the Lebanese Army is carrying out mopping up operations on the Suq Al-Gharb front. The Lebanese Army caused over 100 casualities and destroyed more than 10 military vehicles, including 5 tanks, and continues to chase the remnants of the attackers.

The unsuccessful offensive on the Suq al-Gharb front concentrated on two targets—Qal'at al-Husn and the Khazzanat Hill. The offensive in which approximately 300 Syrian, Socialist [Druze], and Palestinian soldiers and gunmen took part was preceded by a heavy artillery bombardment at 0400 today.

The Lebanese Army, which detected the offensive, lured the attackers to certain spots before launching a counterattack during which it encircled and annihilated them.

Army Command Statement

NC1308142289 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1349 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Statement issued by the Guidance Directorate of the Lebanese Army on 13 August]

[Text] The Syrian occupation forces a few days ago began destructive, concentrated shelling with various types of heavy artillery and rockets, against the Presidential Palace and the National Defense Ministry, the Army

centers, the Army barracks, and the liberated residential areas, particularly in the southern al-Matn and the northern al-Matn coast as a prelude to a military action.

At dawn today, under heavy cover of artillery and rocket fire, the Syrian enemy launched an attack on the Suq al-Gharb front from four axes, concentrating on Qal'at al-Husn and Tallat al-Prins. The Lebanese Army's units stationed in the area confronted the attackers, and fierce battles ensued which forced the attackers to withdraw, leaving much destroyed equipment and armored vehicles as well as many dead and wounded on the battlefield.

The Lebanese Army units completed mopping up the battlefield at 1500 today and pursued the remnants of the attackers who were trying to remove the wounded and the dead.

The Army Command calls on the citizens not to heed rumors which aim at affecting their morale and steadfastness. It also calls on the local and foreign information media, if they wish, to go to Suq al-Gharb to ascertain the results of the battles.

'Awn Issues Statement

NC1308175489 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 13 Aug 89

[General Michel 'Awn's 13 August message to Army and people—recorded]

[Text] I congratulate the Lebanese Army, which I have the honor to command, for its great sacrifices today in safeguarding Lebanon's sovereignty and independence, and preserving the prestige of the Lebanese identity. The Army stood firmly against the barbarism of the Syrian regime which resorted to all methods of terrorism and all destructive weapons today to undermine our steadfastness and kill our people. The Syrian regime was today defeated in the battle for which it has been preparing the past 5 years. They were defeated today in the battle for which they prepared in the press and media the past 5 years. I fulfilled today my promise to the Lebanese. No one in Lebanon can defeat the Lebanese people. This is the day of the victory of the heroic Lebanese people which produced this Army and manifested this steadfastness. I congratulate everyone and I also appreciate shouldering a responsibility in the name of this people.

I expect new stands and better understanding of Lebanon. On the other hand, I expect nothing more than intransigence and barbarism by the Syrians. The Syrians believed today that by destroying the Presidential Palace with their heavy artillery, they could affect my decision and the course of command. Despite all this, the command proceeds on course and the decision will be upheld. Lebanon will triumph and the Lebanese people will continue to be proud. The Syrian regime will remain the agent 'Alawite secterian regime which is trying to upstage the Muslim Lebanese in order to justify its usurpation of power in Syria.

Palestinians Involved in Fight

JN1408061889 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0510 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] Fatah-Provisional Command, led by Colonel Abu-Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha], has issued a statement confirming that its forces participated in the Suq al-Gharb battle. In the statement, Fatah-Provisional Command said that it is illogical that we stand idly by while our forces are stationed at the scene of operations, and it is only natural that we fight alongside the Lebanese nationalist forces.

Syrian Involvement Denied

NC1408060289 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0430 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] Replying to what the media organs of al-Yarzah army have attempted to disseminate, a responsible source in the Syrian Arab forces in Lebanon has said that what took place in Suq al-Gharb was no more than an exchange of fire between the Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] forces and the 'Awn militia. He added that the PSP forces dealt a disciplinary blow to some of these militias in Suq al-Gharb and that the operation successfully accomplished its planned objectives.

The source said that the claims by 'Awn's sources which were carried by some news agencies about the Syrian forces' participation in this disciplinary operation are completely baseless and that no Syrian soldier had taken part or moved from his position. The source added: When the Lebanese nationalist forces see a need for the Syrian forces to participate with them in an important action, then the Syrian forces will stand with them without delay. No one should doubt that the result of this action will be decisive, he said.

The Syrian source categorically denied the news agencies' reports citing an 'Awn spokesman on the capture of three Syrian soldiers during the Beirut battles.

Syrian 'Casualties' Detailed

NC1308190689 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1815 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Informed sources affirmed to the Voice of Lebanon a short while ago that the casualties on the Suq al-Gharb front today were as follows: 22 dead from the Syrian 82d and 806th Battalions; 15 dead from the Socialist Progressive Party; and 25 dead from the Palestinian organizations. This is in addition to a large number of wounded, missing, and prisoners.

The casualties on the Ra's al-Nab' front were nine dead and six wounded from the Syrian Army's 807th Battalion as well as four dead from the Ba'th forces. Two Syrian Army tanks were also hit.

Attacks Continue in West Beirut 14 Aug

NC1408155789 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1430 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Excerpts] Residential neighborhoods in West Beirut, the southern Suburb, the Mountain, the al-Biqa', and the upper al-Matn are still the target of attacks by the al-Yarzah army, which resumed its attacks against the nationalist areas at 1130 today. The attacks were accompanied by clashes on the various traditional confrontion lines in Beirut, the Suburb, the Mountain, and al-Matn. The areas of Bi'r al-'Abd, al-Shiyah, al-Hamra', and the airport road have been coming under artillery fire since 1700 today. A number of children were reportedly wounded in the residential neighborhoods of Bi'r al-'Abd. [passage omitted]

The al-Yarzah army attacks today left 2 people dead and 10 others wounded. [passage omitted]

More Clashes, Shelling Reported

NC1408154089 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1345 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Excerpts] Clashes involving the use of automatic weapons, rockets, and artillery have been taking place on the al-Dawwar-al-'Ayrun front since 1300 today. Shells have also fallen in the area of Bikfayya.

Security sources said that the Syrian occupation forces have reinforced their positions along the contact lines in Beirut, the southern Suburb, the Mountain, and al-Matn. They concentrated troops and armored vehicles along the battle fronts as part of the ground war which Damascus began yesterday. [passage omitted]

The Museum-al-Barbir and 'Ayn al-Rummanah-al-Tayyunah-Dar al-Kitab confrontation lines are the scene of clashes between Lebanese Army and Syrian occupation army positions. Shells have fallen in residential neighborhoods in 'Ayn al-Rummanah, Badaru, and the outskirts of al-Ashrafiyah.

Central al-Matn, central Kasrawan, al-Hazimiyah, and al-Luwayzah have been coming under intermittent artillery fire since 1600 today. [passage omitted]

As a result of the shelling which was directed at central al-Matn, Yusuf Ispir was killed and three others were wounded. A woman, 60, was wounded in Qurnat Shahawan area and taken to the hospital. She was released a short while ago. The shelling also started several fires in the southern al-Matn and the central northern al-Matn.

Fadlallah Offers To Help Release Hostages

NC1108144289 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1430 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Hizballah's spiritual guide, scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, said in his Friday sermon today that he is willing to help release Western hostages on the condition that Western countries help release Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners in Israel. He said: Let us agree and try together, each in his own way and with his own influence, to end the hostage crisis, for all the hostages, and to end the issue of Arab prisoners inside and outside the homeland.

More on Fadlallah Comments

NC1108155189 Paris AFP in English 1514 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Beirut, Aug 11 (AFP)—Lebanon's pro-Iranian Shiite spiritual leader, Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, said Friday he was ready to act in the hostage crisis provided that this would resolve the matter overall.

"I am ready to act and cooperate with the whole world in the hostage issue on condition that this brings an end to the whole affair," he told worshippers during Friday prayers at the Bi'r al-'Abd mosque in the Shiite stronghold of Beirut's southern suburbs.

He added that the issue of "prisoners in the Israeli-occupied territories, the al-Khiyam prison (Israeli-occupied southern Lebanon) and in Beirut's two sectors," should also be settled.

Analysts said that since the hostage crisis began in 1985, intercessions by the shaykh have helped lift threats against the detainees and have often coincided with the start of negotiations which have eventually achieved the release of some hostages.

Shaykh Fadlallah proposed a comprehensive solution to the hostage crisis and the freeing of all prisoners and kidnapped persons. "Our humanitarian principles are non-discriminatory," he added.

The comments came as Iran, the United States, Israel and Syria were working to seek the release of a Shiite cleric, Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd, kidnapped by Israel in Lebanon last month, and the freeing of Shiite and Palestinian militiamen in exchange for Israeli soldiers and Western hostages in Lebanon.

The Israeli abduction of Shaykh 'Ubayd led to the announcement July 31 by a Lebanese group that it had hanged Lieutenant Colonel William Higgins, an American serving with U.N. peacekeeping forces in Lebanon and a threat by another group to kill U.S. hostage Joseph Cicippio.

"We favor the release of all unjustly held detainees. But one must not apply a double standard," Shaykh Fadlallah said Friday.

He blasted the "U.S fleet movements" around the Middle East and an "Israeli military show of force for the benefit of the Western hostages and Israeli prisoners" following the latest twist in the hostage drama.

Israel has offered to exchange Shaykh 'Ubayd, considered a leader of the pro-Iranian Hizballah, and all its other Shiite prisoners in return for three Israeli soldiers and the foreign hostages believed held by Shiite groups in Lebanon.

"Thousands of our people have been abducted in the east (Lebanon's Christian-held regions)," Shaykh Fadlallah said, adding that "certain Lebanese and Westerners had been kidnapped in our regions (predominantly Muslim West Beirut and the southern suburbs)."

He asked why Shaykh Tawassuli, an 80-year-old Iranian cleric had been seized in the Christian area.

Shaykh Tawassuli—a religious authority—has hitherto not been mentioned in the hostage issue. Tehran has claimed that three of its diplomats and a Lebanese journalist had disappeared in 1982 in the region controlled by the Christian Lebanese forces militia.

In a related development, Iran Thursday denied what it called "suspicious" reports of talks between Tehran and Washington, but acknowledged that indirect contacts over Western hostages in Lebanon were unde way through third countries.

IRNA Cites Fadlallah

LD1108163389 Tehran IRNA in English 1442 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Beirut, Aug. 11, IRNA—Muslim preacher 'Allamah Fadlallah said at Friday mass prayers at the Imam Reza (AS) [God's peace be upon him] mosque here that the Americans are exploiting humanistic issues for solely political gains in Lebanon.

He said they have made a big issue in the news of the few non-Muslim hostages in Lebanon while remaining totally silent about thousands of Muslim hostages in the hands of Zionist enemies.

He said Muslims do not uphold hostage taking but noted that if the action is principally wrong it must be regarded as wrong and equally so whether done by Muslims or non-Muslims.

The Muslim preacher said Muslims are ready to put an end once and for all to such problems in Lebanon "on the basis of justice and equity."

He also condemned the bombing of Muslim areas in Lebanon and the killing of civilians in that country by Zionist troops.

Sees 'Logical Solution'

NC1308055989 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 0430 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has stated that the issue of the Western hostages held in Lebanon will proceed toward a logical solution, but he warned against the possibility of the United States resorting to a military operation against Hizballah. He affirmed that such an operation will achieve nothing but will endanger the lives of the hostages, increase the possibilities for what the U.S. calls terrorism, and lead to the mobilization of the revolutionary forces that are opposed to U.S. policy in the area. Fadlallah added that the diplomacy that relies on force no longer scares anybody in Lebanon now that Lebanon has been subjected to all kinds of destruction.

In a radio intrerview, Scholar Fadlallah said that Washington can resolve the hostages issue.

Hizballah Reiterates Refusal To Negotiate

NC1408151589 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1455 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] Hizballah has reiterated its refusal to negotiate with the Zionist entity for the release of the Zionist soldiers being held in Lebanon. It also rejected any attempt to link their fate with the fate of the Western hostages.

In a statement issued today, a responsible Hizballah source affirmed that there is no desire at all to negotiate with the Zionist terrorist enemy, stressing that the question of the Zionist prisoners has nothing to do with the question of the Western hostages.

'High-Level' U.S.-Syrian Talks Expected

NC1208152089 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] AFP has cited a political official close to Damascus as saying that the shelling will continue until the United States and Syria start talks and reach results on the issue of the Lebanese problem. The source added that these contacts have not yet started but are expected to start soon at a high level.

'Awn Reportedly Meets Iraqi, Israeli Officials

NC1208143089 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Within the framework of Iraqi-Israeli support for 'Awn and the contacts between these parties to continue the escalation and obstruct Arab efforts once again, reports revealed today that Lieutenant Colonel Fu'ad al-Ashqar, chief of military security in the al-Yarzah

[East Beirut] army, visited Israel a few days ago and met with a number of Israeli officials. According to the reports, al-Ashqar conveyed a message from leader of the military gang, Michel 'Awn, in which 'Awn briefed the Israelis on the latest political and security developments in Lebanon following the issuance of the recent tripartite committee statement. 'Awn also asked the Israelis for information on the Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd operation and the ensuing developments in the hostage issue.

The reports said the Israelis expressed their satisfaction with the recent developments in Lebanon and with Michel 'Awn's stands. They asked al-Ashqar to convey their compliments to 'Awn and called on him to adhere to his statement in a recent interview regarding his readiness to revive the al-Naqurah negotiations after the war of liberation from Syria has been completed. In return, they asserted their commitment to supporting him and to providing the necessary means for this war.

The reports noted that the Israelis assured Al-Ashqar that the U.S. stand is developing positively and that Washington will begin to use more decisive and firm language vis-a-vis Syria. They said that the hostage issue, which they triggered with the abduction of Shaykh 'Ubayd, helped drive the United States in this direction.

In the meantime, Arab diplomatic sources have disclosed that a meeting took place in the last 2 days between Colonel 'Amir Shihab, chief of the intelligence branch in the al-Yarzah army, and Major General Fadil Barrak, former chief of the Iraqi intelligence service, who was recently appointed adviser to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. Reports said Shihab briefed Barrak on the latest developments, praising the Iraqi role and thanking the Iraqi leadership. For his part, Barrak conveyed to Shihab his leader's satisfaction with the way the situation in Lebanon is developing and with Michel 'Awn's stands, especially his stand on the statement made by his ambassador in Iraq, Hikmat 'Awwad. 'Awwad had disclosed that Iraq has supplied the military gang with other advanced weapons in addition to the FROG missiles.

The reports said that Barrak praised 'Awn's prudence and keenness in relations with Iraq. Barrak expressed the view that 'Awwad's statement nearly upset the work of the Arab tripartite committee, but noted that this was avoided.

Barrak pointed out that Iraq will continue its battle to the end to drive Syria out of Lebanon and is willing to provide all kinds of aid to 'Awn and his forces, which show readiness to destabilize the situation in the areas in which Syrian Army exists.

The reports also said Barrak told Shihab that, in the past days, Iraq had forcefully confronted attempts to revive the tripartite committee established in accordance with the Casablanca summit resolutions after positive signs from Syria and a campaign for the resumption of the committee's work. Barrak affirmed that Iraq had intervened with some Arab countries to prevent them from making such an attempt and added that Iraq will coordinate with others to convene an Arab summit late this month.

Paper Outlines 'Ubayd Abduction Motives

JN1208104689 Kuwait AL-SIYASAH in Arabic 10-11 Aug 89 pp 1, 17

[By Najih Khalil]

[Text] AL-SIYASAH has received information—from Arab and international diplomatic sources and channels with well-informed contacts in Washington, Beirut, and Nicosia—on the Israeli motives behind the abduction of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd, one of the Hizballah leaders, from his house in southern Lebanon. In light of the importance of the event, the plan to kidnap Shaykh 'Ubayd was prepared very carefully on the political level in order to remove the rope from the israeli neck by sabotaging certain political calculations. This is the direct, objective analysis of the political objective laid down by Israel for the kidnapping.

The details are as follows: Pursuant to direct orders from Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, the Israeli army command carried out the abduction to abort efforts by the PLO—in coordination with Washington—to release the hostages. The sources told AL-SIYASAH that the PLO presented this initiative to the U.S. Administration during one of the Tunis sessions. The American authorities agreed on the Palestinian initiative and began coordination with the PLO to this effect.

The same sources did not rule out the possibility that Washington informed the PLO of its support for the PLO's efforts to release the hostages. Other information received by AL-SIYASAH says that the U.S. Administration, at the highest levels, showed readiness to receive Yasir 'Arafat accompanied by the hostages at the White House if the PLO's efforts succeeded.

AL-SIYASAH information adds that the PLO departments' efforts in this regard have made great advances with Hizballah. The departments have overcome many difficulties that in the past obstacles to any attempt to free the hostages. In addition to this, the Palestinian departments were able to extract Hizballah's initial agreement on the need to free the hostages.

The same sources disclosed to AL-SIYASAH that the Israeli Mosad was able—through its extensive presence in Lebanon- to learn about the Palestinian efforts. The official in charge of the Mosad in Lebanon informed his government of the information he received. And it was decided to kidnap one of the Hizballah leaders to undermine the PLO's efforts and to remove it from the hostage crisis.

In light of the information the Israeli security services have on the Hizballah leaders, they selected Shaykh 'Ubayd because, in terms of security, he is considered an easier target as his house is close to the border strip and the necessary security protection is not available. The Israeli objective is to bypass the Palestinian efforts and confine efforts [on the hostages' release] to those between Israel and Hizballah.

AL-SIYASAH's information said that Israel's other objective in Shaykh 'Ubayd's abduction is to abort the PLO's attempts to develop its relations with Washington, particularly if the PLO's efforts were crowned with the release of American hostages and the U.S. Administration received 'Arafat at the White House. This would result in Washington recognizing the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and joining the call for an international conference. This is in addition to the humanitarian face with which the PLO would appear to world opinion at a time when Israel's reputation is deteriorating as a result of its practices in the occupied territory.

The same sources added that Israel also had the objective of thwarting Arab, Lebanese, and international efforts to solve the Lebanese crisis because it believes that solving the Lebanon crisis would focus efforts on the Palestine question. The sources recall that the U.S. Administration under Carter expressed readiness to receive 'Arafat at the White House if he was able to release the American hostages in Tehran. But, the Iranian rejection communicated to 'Arafat personally by Khomeyni aborted the Palestinian efforts early on and Khomeyni wasted an opportunity which the Palestinians have been waiting for.

In another development, in an exclusive statement to AL-SIYASAH, PLO Executive Committee Member Muhammad Milhim did not rule out the possibility that Israel would abort any Arab or international efforts to free the hostages. This is because it is not in Israel's interest to achieve genuine progress toward a genuine peace in the Middle East. The release of hostages and the response to peace initiatives are part of that progress. Israel also wants to maintain tension in Lebanon.

Milhim said: I believe that Israel was disappointed when the rest of hostages were not executed because it is in its direct interest to drag the United States into the region militarily, and consequently, to torpedo the peace process. Milhim added: Israel lost an opportunity when no more hostages were executed. And this came after advice from all Palestinian, Arab, and international parties to Hizballah.

Answering a question by AL-SIYASAH, Muhammad Milhim said: Since the crisis of the hostages of the American Embassy in Tehran, the PLO's efforts and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's personal efforts have always been focused on how to release the hostages. In fact, these efforts succeeded in releasing many hostages in Lebanon, the occupied territory, and Afghanistan.

On his assessment of Shaykh 'Ubayd's abduction, Milhim said: We wonder why the world did not condemn the state terrorism practiced by Israel as it did in branding the PLO with the stigma of terrorism. And we wonder why world opinion did not condemn, in the same way, terrorist Sharon's statement in which he called for assassinating the Palestinian president.

Spokesman Denies Participation in Lebanon Battles

JN1408044889 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0415 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Statement issued by military spokesman]

[Text] Yesterday, a Western news agency cited its correspondent in East Beirut—who is known for his unreliability in describing the ongoing events in Lebanon and for his exposed bias toward 'Awn's military clique—as giving fabricated news on the participation of the Syrian forces operating in Lebanon in battles in Suq al-Gharb.

These reports that were broadcast—without verification—by a known Western radio also are groundless. These reports raise the listeners' ridicule and disgust because no Syrian soldier participated in the Suq al-Gharb battle.

The military clique's slogans of the wars of liberation and destruction will rebound a defeat until Lebanon triumphs. 'Awn's statements yesterday on nonexistent battles with the Syrian forces will soon turn into his real defeat, not at the hands of the Syrian forces, but at the hands of the nationalist and Islamic forces, which, during the past period, were advised by Syria not to be dragged into military methods to resolve the Lebanese crisis.

Papers Cited on 'Awn, Attempts at Solution

JN1308080089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0445 GMT 13 Aug 89

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "A Serious Turning Point," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: It might be useful, at this serious turning point in the Lebanese crisis, to remind people of the one who really stands to benefit from obstructing all the efforts made to reach a solution designed to restore normalcy to Lebanon on the basis of national accord based on political reforms which ensure justice and equality for all the Lebanese.

AL-THAWRAH adds: It is no surprise that the agent clique has fled from the Arab solution, requesting that the crisis be internationalized and that it be tackled by the hot winds which were behind the plans to partition the region and which are currently attempting to maintain their political hegemony on the region through various means.

Concluding its editorial, AL-THAWRAH says: It is necessary to recall that the solution attempts from overseas have always failed to produce a real solution, as events have shown that the solution can only come from inside Lebanon through the unified efforts of the genuine nationalists who adhere, in word and deed, to Lebanon's unity and Arabism. Besides, events have also proven that the solution can only be attained through ending the subversive Israeli role in the Lebanese arena. Syria will continue to honor the nationalist and pan-Arab contents of such a solution through its role, which can never be ignored in all higher pan-Arab issues, foremost among which are the Palestine question and the Lebanese issue, considering the structural links between these two causes, as the expansionist Zionist scheme is targeting the pan-Arab existence of the Palestinians and the Lebanese.

AL-BA'TH's editorial also tackles the Lebanese situation. Under the headline "The Isolationist Clique and Schizophrenia," AL-BA'TH says: It seems that the schizophrenia plaguing 'Awn has affected the remaining members of the isolationist clique surrounding him, including his political and military advisers as well as his intelligence elements which coordinate with Mosad and the henchmen of Iraq's butcher. All of these seek to destroy Lebanon and kill its sons through the demolition of its infrastructure and also through striking at the steadfastness of its masses which aspire to the materialization of liberation, sovereignty, and justice.

The paper adds: The isolationists first announced their rejection of the Casablanca summit resolutions when the ink used to write these resolutions was still wet. Then, they chose to do away with this explicit rejection of theirs and attempted to project the image of a party that accepted these resolutions. However, their deeds conflicted with their words, as they began to escalate their criminal shelling of secure areas, killing and evicting people, causing destruction, and consequently causing the tripartite committee to reach a deadlock.

Concluding its editorial, AL-BA'TH says: Amidst this duplicity and schism between words and deeds, the isolationist clique has returned to sing the tunes of internationalization, affirming that this is not different from Arabization. This means that all that this clique wants is to gain time to prolong the days of destruction. However, the nationalist forces, which are aware of the dimensions of the conspiracy, are ready to thwart the isolationist plan and save Lebanon from the rancorous and sick clique plaguing it. Salvation is only possible through the toppling and elimination of this clique once and for all.

Press Cited Further

JN1408070889 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0415 GMT 14 Aug 89

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "The Purpose of 'Awn's Waving the al-Naqurah Negotiations," TISHRIN says: The nature and objective of the conspiracy carried out by 'Awn and his Zionized clique become clearer every day through the shelling, destruction, and displacement of

the Lebanese citizens. The paper adds that 'Awn's objective is to empty and destroy Beirut pursuant to the treasonous role given to him in the service of the Israeli enemy schemes aimed at turning Lebanon into a Zionist protectorate.

TISHRIN says: Israel's known attempts to fragment Lebanon and turn it into sectarian cantons—attempts that were doomed to failure as a result of the Lebanese nationalist resistance and its blows to the Israeli enemy—affirm that 'Awn's destructive role is to abort the effects of the nationalist resistance in a suicidal attempt to go back in time by waving the al-Naqurah negotiations that produced the 17 May agreement and to seek support from the enemy to affiliate Lebanon with the Zionist entity.

AL-BA'TH says: Lebanon is confronting the crime of high treason as it is afflicted by a gambler who, together with his military clique, usurped B'abda Palace, nominated himself owner of Lebanon, and began to tamper with Lebanon's fate pursuant to a Zionist scheme whose only objective is to destroy Lebanon, and then, to divide it into fragile petty states that are easily devoured and annexed.

Concluding its editorial, AL-BA'TH says: The Lebanese people, who rejected and bravely resisted the Zionist plan in southern Lebanon, Beirut, and the suburb, are capable of putting an end to the adventure of the agent military clique that is approaching its inevitable climax.

Al-Shar' Receives Letter From France's Dumas

JN1208203889 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2015 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Damascus—French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas has sent a letter to Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' on the latest military escalation between the Lebanese parties. The letter was conveyed by the French charges d'affaires in Damascus. The letter includes a request that Syria make every effort possible toward a cease-fire in Lebanon.

For his part, Al-Shar' emphasized that 'Awn must take responsibility for the latest escalation and that he insists on pursuing the military option, refusing to abide by the cease-fire previously consented to by the nationalist forces, including the lifting of blockades and inspection of ships on both sides to intercept arms shipments.

Meanwhile, Al-Shar' has agreed to a request by Dumas that the secretary general of the French Foreign Ministry have talks with Syrian officials as an envoy of the French Government.

Receives French Envoy

JN1308144089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1415 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received this morning Francois Cher, director general of the French Foreign Ministry and envoy of the French Government.

During the meeting, they exchanged opinions about the situation in Lebanon and the recent developments in Lebanese affairs. Agreement was reached to continue dialogue between the Syrian and French Governments.

Further on Talks

JN1308130289 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Louis Faris dispatch from Damascus]

[Text] The Syrian and French sides held long talks at the Syrian Foreign Ministry today on the situation in Lebanon. They are the first talks of this kind between the two sides for almost 3 months. A high-level French envoy, Francois Cher, director general of the French Foreign Ministry, arrived in Damascus last night accompanied by the deputy chief of the Middle East section in the Quai d'Orsay.

The two French envoys met with Minister Faruq al-Shar' for 3 hours in the presence of the French charge d'affaires and senior officials of the Syrian Foreign Ministry. Later, a French spokesman simply said that Cher held intensive talks on the situation in Lebanon and that he would not say anything before submitting his report tonight to President Francois Mitterrand.

An official Syrian source said last night that Minister al-Shar' received a letter from his French counterpart Roland Dumas, which was conveyed by the French charge d'affairs in Damascus, requesting Syria to exert every possible effort to stop the fighting in Lebanon. The official source added that Minister al-Shar' affirmed to Minister Dumas that General 'Awn is responsible for the recent escalation, that he insists on his military option, and that he refuses to abide by the cease-fire which the nationalist forces had previously agreed upon, including lifting the sieges and searching ships belonging to both sides to prevent arms supplies.

Soviet Ships in Tartus Port on 'Maximum Alert'

JN1208113889 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 10 Aug 89 p 20

[Text] Damascus—Western military sources have stated that the Soviet ships and experts at the port of Tartus have been on maximum alert since the eruption of the current hostage crisis, particularly after the United States threatened to launch air strikes on Hizballah

strongholds in al-Biqa' as these might develop into strikes at the Syrian air defense network in the region which is linked to the Syrian air defenses that are run by Soviet experts.

The sources described the Soviet measure as "routine" and was apparently taken after the United States had informed the Soviet leadership of measures that might be taken if any U.S. hostage was executed.

Western military experts noted that the Soviet helicopter cruiser "Moskva," which left Syrian territorial waters before the outbreak of the hostage crisis to return to the Black Sea, was ordered to stay in the Mediterranean. A Soviet communications vessel and two escort frigates have also sailed down the Dardanelles. It is believed that they are heading for the Syrian port.

TISHRIN Views Suicide Operation in Lebanon

JN1008122189 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0830 GMT 10 Aug 89

[Text] Damascus, 10 Aug (SANA)—In a comment today, the newspaper TISHRIN says: The heroic martyrdom operation carried out by the Lebanese nationalist resistance yesterday represents a new step toward destroying the so-called security zone and asserting that the occupation is unable to entrench its feet.

TISHRIN adds: The martyrdom operation is significant because it is a blow to the Israeli factor, which is represented in occupying part of the Lebanese territory, and a means of undermining Zionist relations with the isolationist gang, which has been transformed into an instrument to achieve Zionist ambitions designed to foil the unity of the Lebanese people and their national reconciliation and prevent them from directing all their capabilities to expelling the invaders from the south.

TISHRIN continues: The escalation of the Lebanese nationalist resistance against Zionist invaders and Lahd forces constitutes a genuine support for the burning intifadah [uprising] in the West Bank, Gaza, and the heroic Golan Heights—an intifadah that is destroying the Israeli identity on a daily basis and persistently resisting the bestial Zionist occupation.

TISHRIN concludes: In light of the achievements of the heroic intifadah in terms of the rift in the enemy strategy and its immense losses in men and equipment, the enemy finds itself in a dark tunnel with no exit in sight. Meanwhile, the fact is emphasized that there can be no alternative to liberation that will pave the way for freedom and for liquidating the agents and the plotters who conspire againt Lebanon and the Arab nation.

Al-Asad's Brother Said Involved in Incident

JN1308174089 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 1430 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] According to AL-NASHRAH newspaper [not further identified], Syrian president's brother Jamil al-Asad and his son Fawwaz were involved in a serious bloody incident at Latakia port over goods smuggling. The paper reports that on the eve of 'Id al-'Adha, Syrian officers and soldiers broke into several cargo ships anchored in the port and looted smuggled goods. When informed about this, Fawwaz al-Asad and his cousin Bashshar, son of the Syrian president, rushed to the scene with their militias. Violent fighting erupted between the two parties and scores of people were killed or wounded.

Citing diplomatic Arab sources in Paris, AL-NASHRAH said that Jamil al-Asad and his family have recently arrived in Paris upon President al-Asad's orders.

Two New Oil Fields Begin Production

JN0908060889 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 8 Aug 89

[Excerpt] Engineer Dr Nadir Nabulsi, assistant minister of oil and mineral wealth for oil affairs and chairman of the board of directors of the al-Furat Company, today inaugurated production at the al-Tayyanah and al-Tanf oil fields in the areas of Dayr al-Zawr and al-Sham in the presence of representatives from the Shell, Deminex, and Pechten companies and the technical managers of the al-Furat Company.

Dr Nabulsi said these two oil fields, which were discovered at the beginning of 1988, are expected to produce 50,000 barrels per day in the current stage, which is the first stage of their development.

In a statement to SANA, al-Furat Company Director General (Van Lingen) said other oil fields have recently been discovered and are now being developed whether by digging more wells or by erecting installations and providing the necessary facilities in order to start production as soon as possible. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

Gen 'Ulumi Confirms Supply of MiG's, SU-27's

BK1108141189 Hong Kong AFP in English 1400 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Kabul, Aug 11 (AFP)—The Soviet Union has promised to supply the Afghan Air Force with an unspecified number of MiG-29 and SU-27 fighter aircraft, a senior Afghan general said.

General 'Abdol Haq 'Ulumi, Central Committee member responsible for the Armed Forces, told Western journalists in an interview Thursday [10 August] that "the contract has been completed. Soon they (the planes) will come."

"We will use them if necessary," Gen. Ulumi said. "These are aircraft which are to defend Afghanistan in the face of a possible Pakistani air attack."

London Daily Interviews Najibullah

LD0908204189 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1530 GMT 9 Aug 89

[Announcer-read interview with Najibullah by correspondent (Kamran Qaradaghi) of the London daily AL-HAYAT; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Question] Afghanistan is an Islamic country with religious traditions. At present, relations between Kabul and almost all Islamic countries do not actually exist. Indeed, only four Islamic countries have officially recognized the mujahidin government in exile, but this does not mean that other Islamic countries of the world have normal relations with your country. What practical measures are being taken by your government towards the normalization of relations with the Islamic government, including the Arab countries??

[Answer] Forgive me if I say that you do not have sufficient information about the relations of Afghanistan with the Islamic countries. Actually, we have diplomatic relations with almost all these countries. In addition, we have diplomatic relations with 18 Islamic and Arab countries at the level of resident or non-resident ambassadors. In connection with the historical, religious, cultural, and traditional friendly links with the world of Islam and the Arab world, the Republic of Afghanistan has made and is making necessary efforts to further expand and strengthen relations with these countries in a variety of levels and dimensions.

[Question] The Islamic Republic of Iran has always displayed opposition against your government. Do you see any signs that Tehran would change its position vis-a-vis Kabul, particularly now when Soviet-Iran relations are entering a completely new and normal phase?

[Answer] One of the major and fundamental aims of our foreign policy is that we should have normal and friendly relations with friendly countries on the basis of the principles of mutual respect, noninterference, and cooperation. We have consistently tried to eliminate the stagnation which has come about in our relations with these countries as a result of the special developments and changes in this region of the world.

The cessation of armed hostilities between Iran and Iraq, the return of the Soviet units from Afghanistan and the recent developments in relations between the Soviet Union and Iran have brought about suitable conditions for the maintenance of goodneighborliness and normal relations between Afghanistan and Iran. While this process serves the maintenance of mutual interests of our two countries and peace and security in the region, it does not leave any sort of negative effect in our relations with other countries.

[Question] Discord among the mujahidin groups has existed, but their desire to topple your government is very strong.

[Answer] You should realize that our strength, unity, and resoluteness are facts which exist independently and objectively and have no link whatsoever with the weakness and discord of the opposition groups. It is a natural (?factor) that the policy of national reconciliation has resulted in further discords and severe contradictions between the opposition groups. Their most extreme and most war-mongering groups are being isolated more than ever before. The desire of the opponents towards confronting the republican government of Afghanistan depends on what position has been taken by their international protectors. The existence of discord among the opposition has made it necessary to utilize mercenaries, in particular Arab mercenaries, in order to fill the gap. We have examples of the Arabs who have been captured. Of course, hundreds of them have been killed on the battlefields.

[Question] Do you believe in the Western type of democracy in Afghanistan based on political pluralism?

[Answer] Democracy is a popular phenomenon. There is a multitude [of democracies] even in Western democracy. A traditional democracy whose specific characteristics are composed of the jirgah system has always existed in Afghanistan. This system throughout society, from the level of local and tribal jirgahs to the level of Loya Jirgah, has its roots. Our policy of national reconciliation has brought together the best trend of democracy—Western democracy as well as the laudible traditions of the Afghan people. Our outlook of democracy in Afghanistan is the establishment of a system where law and legality should rule and in which all Afghans, irrespective of their political and ideological loyalties, could have equal rights, obligations, and opportunities.

It is natural in such a system that the phenomenon of political pluralism is enshrined. The present Constitution of Afghanistan, which has been ratified by the Loya Jirgah of the people of Afghanistan, has established the system of a parliamentary republic. The form which the future Constitution of Afghanistan will take depends on the will of the people.

[Question] As a result of the policy of reconstruction and the new political thinking in the Soviet Union, Moscow now considers sending its military forces to Afghanistan a mistake. Do you confirm this opinion?

[Answer] The turn of events which resulted in the creation of the situations inside and around Afghanistan is a complex matter. It will be some time before I can draw a final judgment concerning the logic of measures which have been taken for the purpose of achieving the stated events. The presence of the Soviet forces in Afghanistan has now become a part of history. That which, in my opinion, is now urgent and vital will be the concentration of our efforts and attention in the future.

We should now seek ways and means to put an end to the sinister chain of violence and bloodshed which is the direct product of foreign aggression and interference. In order to achieve this we have proposed peaceful talks for a political solution. The world of Islam and Arab countries could take a positive part in this regard. Our proposals towards holding negotiations in the sacred city of Mecca and our welcoming the mediating role by brother Yasir 'Arafat are indicative of the fact that we attach great importance to the peace-seeking role of the Islamic and Arab countries.

Najibullah Commemorates Imam Husayn's Martyrdom
LD1308061789 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0427 GMT 13 Aug 89

[All punctuation as received]

[Text] Kabul, August 12, BAKHTAR—Today August 12, coincides with the "Muharram 10th"; "the martyrdom day of Hazrat-i Imam Husayn, grandson of Prophet Muhammed". This day has been observed throughout the country by holding gala religious functions.

Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan participated in the prayer ceremony held in Chendawal Takiakhana [as received] "holy place" "Kabul city" and prayed for the soul of that great Islamic personality, Hazrat-i Husayn who had sacrificed himself for the righteous cause of Islam.

According to another report President Najibullah, donated a check of ten million afghanis for the completion and equipment of Chendawal Takiakhana.

Based on other reports, hundred of thousands of pious people of Afghanistan took part today in the meetings held on the same occasion in the capital as well as in provinces of the country. The participants of the religious ceremonies hailed the epics of Hazrat-i Imam Husayn and prayed for the holy soul of this great personality and realization of national reconciliation as well as ensuring peace in the country.

In the meeting held in the capital the citizens of Kabul prayed for the souls of Husayn and his 70 friends martyred by Yazid in Karbala' "Iraq" over one thousand years ago. They also asked the pious people of Afghanistan to spare no effort for the implementation of national reconciliation which is fully conforms with the holy principles of Islam.

BAKHTAR correspondent report that governors, provincial party secretaries, scholars and clergies participated in the ceremonies convened on the occasion in the provinces and prayed for the soul of the grandson of Prophet Muhammad, Hazrat-i Imam Husayn and condemned the barbarian actions of extremists which are full contrary to the sacred goal of Islam.

Kabul City Garrison Commander Interviewed
LD1108063289 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0457 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Kabul, August 10, BAKHTAR—The garrisons of Kabul city have taken all-sided measures for preventing rocket attacks on Kabul city, said General M. Afzal Lodin, commander of Kabul garrison in an interview to a BAKHTAR reporter. He added that two types of measures have been taken to rebuff the rocket attacks: The first type of measures include permanent security and the other one is a temporary one to avert the danger. The permanent security measures he continued to say, consist of the establishment of the posts of the Armed Forces in the security belts around Kabul city and the regular air patrolling. Among the temporary measures, the mopping up operations and periodical searching of Kabul city, the staging of artillery and air attacks on the probable positions of the enemy from where rockets are fired on Kabul city.

General M. Afzal Lodin recalled that the terrorist groups, attached to Pakistan, the United States and Saudi Arabia, have intensified their rocket attacks on Kabul city. For instances, number of 489 rockets were fired on Kabul city during the past month only, which have caused considerable human and material losses to our countrymen.

In order to prevent rocket attacks on Kabul city the detachments of Kabul garrison have so far carried out mopping up operations inside and outside Kabul city as a result of which a large amount of arms and ammunition fell at the hands of the personnel armed forces, hundreds of terrorists were crushed and tens of others were captured alive as well, he said.

A number of small terrorist groups which had infiltrated inside Kabul city were also arrested. For instance, the culprits of the explosion which took place in Pashtunistan Watt almost a month ago have been arrested, he added.

In reply to the last question, General Lodin said that it is a fact that a number of opposition groups which are natives of Kabul have recently refrained from firing rockets. But some leaders of the extremists want to fill the gap through two ways. First they transferred some members of this groups from other places to the areas around Kabul and by giving money force them to launch rockets on Kabul city. Second, some obstinate Wahhabi [Saudis] mercenaries have been settled in some parts around Kabul which encourage and bribe terroristic groups to fire rockets on Kabul city. From other hand they themselves perform rocket attacks with the help of American experts.

Although the territory around Kabul is very complicated from geographical point of view and suitable for terroristic actions. The retaliatory attacks of Kabul garrison and security forces have foiled a large part of the evil plot of the terrorists and mercenaries of Saudi Wahhabis, General Lodin concluded.

Kabul Reports Fighting Among Rebel Groups

LD1108211189 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1600 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Recently heavy clashes took place among the murderous groups—supported by Pakistan—in some regions of Herat, Nangarhar, and Parvan Provinces.

BAKHTAR's military section reports that as a result of these clashes which took place between the Golbuddin group and other rival groups, 16 people were killed and 4 were injured.

At present, similar clashes are continuing intensively in the districts of Owbeh and Pashtu Zarghu, Herat Province.

'Islamic Court' To Punish Rebels Behind Clash

BK1208103289 Hong Kong AFP in English 1011 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, Aug 12 (AFP)—The Afghan resistance's government is to set up an Islamic court to punish those found guilty of an inter-rebel massacre inside Afghanistan last month, sources said here Saturday.

The court's decision is to be binding and will not be able to be challenged. Observers said the court could order payments to relatives of victims if they agreed to a pardon, or ask for "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth" retribution.

Last month's killing of 30 guerrillas by members of a rival rebel group in the northern province of Takhar, which borders the Soviet Union, has shaken mujahidin unity and led to fears of further clashes.

Washington, one of the rebels' main backers, condemned the incident and urged the mujahidin to close ranks.

The decision to set up an Islamic court was taken after lengthy debate at a meeting to which leaders of the two aggrieved parties were not invited, said the sources. They added that a senior leader of the Pakistani Moslem fundamentalist party Jamiyat-e Eslami and some members of the International Islamic Brotherhood had participated, the sources said.

The composition of the court would be formally announced by the government's prime minister, 'Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, at a press conference within the next 48 hours, said the sources.

Leaders of the two parties were also expected to release a joint statement asking their field commanders to abide by the Islamic court's decision, they added.

The massacre took place on July 9, after guerrillas of fundamentalist Moslem leader Golbuddin Hekmatyar reportedly ambushed a group belonging to Burhanuddin Rabbani's Jamiyat-e Eslami party. The Jamiyat group was on its way back from a military meeting held under Jamiyat Commander Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, Jamiyat sources have said. Jamiyat claims that 30 guerrillas, including five senior field commanders, were gunned down by Mr. Hekmatyar's men. Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami has confirmed the incident, but says only 11 rebels were killed.

Hezb-e Eslami says the incident was a sequel to an old rivalry between commanders which was being publicised because Mr. Hekmatyar had launched a campaign to coordinate fighting during a recent trip to Afghanistan. But both Mr. Hekmatyar, the rebels government's foreign minister, and Mr. Rabbani, the minister of reconstruction, have accepted the decision to set up the court, the sources said.

A report in the local FRONTIER POST said Pakistani foreign minister, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, who is leaving for Tehran on Wednesday, has advised the different rebel factions to resolve the issue in the "spirit of brotherhood."

The resistance government's decision to set up an Islamic court to probe the internicine clash came as a result of the pressure from Pakistan and other backers to resolve internal differences, said the sources.

Missiles, Explosives Seized in Kabul Area

LD1108190189 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] The organs of the Ministry of State Security prevented the occurence of a satanic conspiracy today.

BAKHTAR's military section reported that the professional criminals deployed 2-kg plastic explosive substances and 13 [words indistinct] mines on the outskirts of Kabul, intending to detonate them in a crowded part of the city, thus causing our compatriots to mourn the loss of their loved ones in these days when our compatriots commemorate the anniverary of the martyrdom of the grandson of Muhammad, peace be upon him. However, this anti-Islamic and antihumane conspiracy was discovered and foiled in time through the full cooperation of the peace-loving people.

Moreover, the personnel of the Ministry of State Security discovered two U.S.-made SAKR-20-type surface-to-surface missiles [as heard] and 3 kgs of explosives which had been deployed for launching and detonating in crowded areas of Kabul. They were discovered and foiled today with the cooperation of the peace-loving people.

BAKHTAR's military section also reported that the Kabul office of the UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan today inspected these explosives which had been deployed on the outskirts of Kabul by the murderers of our people, as well as the cache of weapons and ammunition recently discovered by the State Security organs. They took some notes in this respect.

Missile Attack Kills 1 Person in Kabul

LD1208155689 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] In shutting their eyes to the holiness and glory of Muharram al-Haran [the month in which the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad was beheaded], the killers of our Muslim people again today fired a surface-to-surface missile at a residential region of Kabul city.

The military section of the BIA reported that as result of the firing of this missile, one of our compatriots was martyred and another five persons were injured. The wounded persons were quickly taken to the hospital where they are under treatment. As a result of the firing of this missile, material losses were also inflicted on our compatriots.

Battle Situation in Provinces Detailed

LD1108184589 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] As a result of mopping up and search operations were carried out in Sorkh Rud District, Nangarhar Province, 400 missiles, 270 mortar shells, 115 shells of recoilless gun, 516 antitank shells, and 665 rocket launcher shells were seized by the security forces.

A competent Armed Forces source reported to BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY's military section that the joint enemy forces, consisting of Pakistani militarists, Saudi Wahhabis and the murderous bands attached to them, yesterday used long-range weapons to shell areas outside the city of Jalalabad, security posts along the front line, and security regions. As a result of this shelling, two Armed Forces personnel were killed and another two were injured.

The source added that the Armed Forces units and subunits stationed in this region then shelled the headquarters of our Muslim people's enemies, as a result of which 21 enemies were killed and 33 wounded. A number of ringleaders, Pakistani militarists, and Saudi Wahhabis were among those killed or injured.

Three of the enemy's missile units, two [word indistinct] artillery, four mortars, four rocket launchers and four motor vehicles carrying weapons and ammunition were destroyed.

The Armed Forces source added that as a result of retaliatory action in response to the shellings by the Pakistani backed criminals, 12 criminals were killed, 28 injured and three enemy mortars, two DShK's, and two motor vehicles carrying weapons and ammunition were destroyed.

According to another report, as a result of heavy weapons shelling in Qandahar Province by the criminal groups, one of our soldiers was injured. Retaliatory action by Armed Forces units and subunits killed three robbers and injured five others; and 700 rocket shells and mortar mines were seized from these criminals.

According to another report Pakistan's obedient servants have killed three inhabitants in Herat Province and injured another six compatriots as a result of heavy weapons fire. Due to retaliatory blows inflicted on the enemy's trenches, two robbers were killed and another two injured.

The people's enemies fired heavy weapons yesterday in Laghman Province, killing one of our soldiers and two inhabitants. Also five people were injured and our people suffered some material damage. The Armed Forces units and subunits then crushed 10 of these criminals and injured another five with their aerial and artillery blows.

According to another report, as a result of an ambush carried out in Helmand Province, five criminals were killed, 13 were injured, and 12 of them were arrested. Two enemy motor vehicles and two tractors carrying weapons and ammunition, one motorcycle, six boxes of ammunition for rocket launchers, 10 boxes of ammunition for Kalashnikovs, 10 boxes of ammunition for heavy machineguns, and five boxes of ammunition for DShK's were seized by the Armed Forces. Two weapons and ammunition vehicles carrying a large amount of ammunition were destroyed.

As a result of the Armed Forces' mopping up and search operations around Gerishk city, a ringleader from the Golbuddin murderous band, 'Abdullah, with another two ringleaders and 12 members of this group, were crushed.

The report from BIA's military section adds that the Pakistani-backed criminal groups deployed a numnber of U.S.-made surface-to-surface missiles and one medium-sized mortar in the area surrounding Aybek city, Samangan Province, intending to fire them at the residential regions and thus disrupt our people's peaceful life. However, this evil enemy plan was foiled by the country's security forces and as a result 142 surface-to-surface missiles and one medium- range mortar were seized from these criminals.

Mujahidin Operations in Eastern Provinces Reported
BK1108154589 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say that there were major clashes between the mujahidin and Kabul soldiers in five provinces. In their operations in Kabul, Nangarhar, Qandahar, Paktia, and Balkh, the mujahidin inflicted heavy loss of life and property to Kabul forces, killing about 64 soldiers and wounding 26, and damaging two tanks, three armored cars, and a number of other military vehicles.

During the last 48 hours, the mujahidin launched another attack on Qandahar airport and damaged two war planes on the runway. AFGHAN NEWS AGENCY reports the warplanes were the target of surface-to-surface missiles. The planes were about to take off to bomb mujahidin positions around Qandahar. The crews were killed on the spot. During this attack, the mujahidin damaged a tank and killed four Afghan soldiers.

Bangladesh

Ershad Appoints New Vice President, Prime Minister
BK1208163089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1621 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Dhaka, Aug 12 (AFP)—Bangladesh President Hussain Muhammad Ershad on Saturday appointed Prime Minister Moudud Ahmed as the country's new vice president, the BSS News Agency reported.

Mr. Ahmed was replaced as premier by his deputy, Kazi Zafar Ahmed, BSS said.

BSS said Mr. Moudud and Mr. Ahmed would retain their portfolios as head of the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Information respectively.

Further on New Appointments
BK1308125689 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Mr Moudud Ahmed has been appointed vice president and Kazi Zafar Ahmed prime minister. The president administered the oath of office to the newly-appointed vice president and the prime minister at a ceremony held at Banga Bhavan [presidential palace] Saturday [12 August]. Mr Moudud Ahmed was relieved of his position as the prime minister and Kazi Zafar Ahmed as deputy prime minister and president's political adviser. The president earlier relieved Justice A.K.M. Nurul Islam of the office of the vice president.

Vice President Moudud Ahmed will retain his portfolio of the Ministry of Industries, while Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmad [will retain] the portfolio of the Ministry of Information.

Security Tightened for Awami League Leaders
BK1208090689 Hong Kong AFP in English 0511 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Dhaka, Aug 12 (AFP)—The Bangladesh Government has tightened security measures to protect leaders of the dominant opposition Awami League, officials here said Saturday.

They said the decision to provide "maximum security" for the leaders was taken following an armed attack at the Dhanmondi residence of Sheikh Hasina Wajed late Thursday. No one was injured in the incident, but Sheikh Hasina, leader of her assassinated father's Awami League, was at home at the time, party sources said.

Police and gunmen exchanged several rounds of fire in the late Thursday incident. The gunmen fled the scene when guards returned their fire.

The Awami League chief told reporters Friday that the attackers were the same as those involved in the killing of her father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and several other members of the family in 1975.

Party leaders protesting the incident at a rally Friday charged that the attack was an assassination attempt against their leader.

Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, general secretary of the Awami League, warned that the group involved was "creating a reign of terror by striking at democratic leaders... Such attacks would lead the country towards instability and threaten the nation's independence."

Sheikh Mujib was killed along with several family members in a 1975 coup led by young rebel army officers, who now head the Freedom Party.

Protesting league members damaged several vehicles in downtown Dhaka after the rally. But the Freedom Party chairman, retired Colonel Faruq Rahman, one of the 1975 coup leaders, refuted the charges in a statement late Friday, saying Sheikh Hasina was trying to "create an issue to destabilise the country as she presently lacks political support and that it was an attempt to tarnish his image." He alleged the league workers attacked his party office near Sheikh Hasina's residence.

Police said they were investigating the incident and that no arrests had been made.

Rival Groups Clash

BK1208151689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1450 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Chittagong, Bangladesh, Aug 12 (AFP)—Two persons were killed and six injured, one critically, when rival political activists exchanged fire in this south-eastern port city, police said Saturday.

Police said two unidentified groups clashed at Hathazari Subdistrict, 36 kilometers (22 miles) from here, killing one person instantly and injuring six passersby. One of the injured died on the way to a local hospital, where another person with serious bullet wounds was being treated, police said.

But sources in the ruling Jatiya Party (JP) said here that their activists were attacked by members of the Jatiya Chatra League (JCL), the student wing of the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BKSAL), to settle political differences.

Badrul Alam, a JP worker, was killed when he was hit by a spray of bullets, while his companion, Abdur Rahim, was rushed to a local hospital. A member of the rival JCL, Wahidul Alam, died while being transported to the hospital, witnesses said.

Residents said that JCL activists fired on the JP workers from three-wheeled motorized rickshaws. BKSAL is a component of the eight-party opposition alliance led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed's Awami League.

Police said the dead were buried after religious rituals.

A heavily armed police contingent has been deployed in the area to restore calm, residents said.

India

Gandhi Says Opposition Taking Negative Attitude

BK1308034289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] The prime minister has called upon the youth to preserve the cultural heritage of the country in spite of forces acting against it. Mr Rajiv Gandhi was speaking at a meeting of the National Students Union of India in New Delhi yesterday. He said the responsibility to maintain and preserve the oneness of the country devolves on the shoulders of the students. Mr Gandhi accused the opposition of taking a negative attitude and adopting the politics of convenience. He said the opposition is not interested in the welfare of the people.

Referring to the 155 MM Howitzer gun deal, the prime minister said he is in favor of an open discussion on the issue. Mr Gandhi said the opposition did not participate in the joint parliamentary committee on Bofors, and also opted out from discussions on the Comptroller and Auditor General's report in Parliament as it is afraid of being exposed if the truth comes out. Mr Gandhi wondered how parties with contradictory ideologies are working together. He asked the CPI-M [Communist Party of India—Marxist] to clear their stand on China-Tibet issue and on other communal issues.

Ready for TV Debate on Bofors

BK1408051989 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] The Janata Dal president, Mr V.P. Singh, has reportedly written to the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, about holding a television debate on the 155-mm Howitzer gun deal and other defense matters, while the National Front chairman, Mr N.T. Rama Rao, said in Guntur yesterday that the debate should be in open and on an independent platform and not on television, as he put it.

The National Students Union of India said in a press release that the prime minister, while addressing its meeting on Saturday [12 August] in New Delhi, had reiterated that the government was prepared to have an open discussion on the Bofors issue on any platform, including on television, and in that event, the opposition would stand exposed. The release also quoted the prime minister as saying that the opposition behavior had clearly demonstrated that it was not willing to discuss the Bofors issue. They had declined to participate in the joint parliamentary committee deliberations which went into the deal. Thereafter, the opposition demanded that the CAG [Comptroller and Auditor General] report should be immediately discussed in Parliament. When the government agreed to the demand, the opposition members ran away from the Lok Sabha.

Tamil Leader: Pullout Schedule 'Unrealistic'

BK1208151289 Hong Kong AFP in English 1501 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 12 (AFP)—The chief minister of Sri Lanka's Northeastern Province Saturday called "unrealistic" the deadlines proposed by New Delhi and Colombo for withdrawing Indian troops from his country.

Chief Minister Varadaraja Perumal said after a 15-minute meeting with Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi here that an Indian troop withdrawal could only be linked with the devolution of powers by Colombo to his state government.

India has told Sri Lanka that it is willing to take back an estimated 43,000 troops on the island in phases by February next year. Colombo wants them out by the middle of next month. "These dates are unrealistic," Mr. Perumal told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE. "Even February is unrealistic. But that doesn't mean we want the IPKF (Indian Peacekeeping Force) forever."

India deployed the IPKF troops in Sri Lanka's Tamil-populated northeast under a 1987 bilateral accord that sought to end Tamil separatism. The troops' continued presence has become an irritant between New Delhi and Colombo.

Mr. Perumal did not say if he told Mr. Gandhi that he opposed the deadlines, but described the meeting at the premier's office as "very positive."

"Our meeting has given us confidence and strength," he said at the luxury hotel where he has been living under tight security since arriving August 3. "Mr. Gandhi renewed India's commitment towards the Tamils (in Sri Lanka)." Mr. Perumal is the leader of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), one of the five major Tamil militant groups that laid down arms under the 1987 accord.

Mr. Perumal and his party colleagues have said that they gave up separatism after being promised autonomy for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority and that the situation would revert to square one if the promise was not kept. The chief minister said he has submitted a 30-page document to the Indian government outlining his government's demands, which include a higher proportion of Tamils in Sri Lanka's police and defence forces. The proposals would also be submitted to Colombo, he said.

Mr. Perumal, who is scheduled to return to Sri Lanka Saturday or Sunday, has held extensive discussions with senior Indian officials including External Affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and Defence Minister Krishna Chandra Pant.

Minister Opposes International Convention on Tibet

BK1108161289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] The minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, has said holding of the international convention on Tibet and peace in South Asia is not a wise step and will not be helpful either in the dialogue between the Dalai Lama and China or in improving Sino-Indian relations. It may rather be counterproductive. The minister was giving clarifications on his suo moto statement on the subject in the Rajya Sabha today. He said the Janata Dal leader, Mr George Fernandes, wrote to the external affairs minister on the 21st of last month expressing his intention to hold the conference in New Delhi for 3 days from tomorrow. Mr Narasimha Rao advised him that any activity that may complicate the issue may be avoided.

Replying to a specific query, Mr Natwar Singh said it appears from press reports that the former president, Gyani Zail Singh, and Mr S. Nijalingappa [former Congress Party president] are likely to attend the convention. Mr Natwar Singh said the former president is the privy of the policies of the government of India and if he attends the convention it will be regrettable.

The minister said the Chinese Embassy drew the government's attention to the convention and made an oral representation. They were informed that the government has nothing to do with it and that the convention may be counterproductive. Members from both ruling and the opposition joined the government in condemning the holding of the convention.

A similar statement was made by Mr Natwar Singh in the Lok Sabha.

Congress-I Opposes Convention

BK1308161789 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] The AICC-I [All India Congress Committee-I] has strongly deplored the international convention on Tibet being held in New Delhi, particularly when the relations between India and China have reached a new beginning.

Addressing a news conference in the capital today, the party general secretary, Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad, said the holding of the convention is provocative and a highly politically motivated act prejudicial to the improvement of Sino-Indian relations. He said India has consistently regarded Tibet as an autonomous region of China, while emphasizing the close cultural and religious links between the Indians and Tibetans. The holding of this convention despite clear concensus which emerged in the Rajya Sabha on Friday [11 August] makes it all the more regrettable. The Congress-I has always felt that on important issues relating to the country's foreign policy, there is a concensus which transcended political affiliations.

Mr Azad said that holding of this convention shows that there are certain parties and individuals in the party leadership which think otherwise on a vitally important issue concerning India's relations with China. Mr Azad said that this convention will not help the Dalai Lama and his people in their ongoing dialogue with the Chinese authorities. It will only complicate the process of negotiations. The Dalai Lama is a respected religious leader and has functioned within the parameters of the guidelines laid down by the government.

Mr Azad asked the opposition parties, particularly the Janata Dal, to make their stand clear on the issue as an important opposition leader is behind the organization of the convention.

In a separate statement, the minister of state for information and broadcasting, Professor K.K. Tiwari, said that the Janata Dal leader, Mr V.P. Singh, cannot escape the responsibility for holding the convention as some of his important party leaders like Mr George Fernandes

and Mr Surendra Mohan are involved in the organization of this convention. Equally regrettable is the presence of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr L.K. Advani; the former president, Giani Zail Singh; Mr S. Nijalangappa; and Mr Balraj Madhok at the convention.

Army Sent 'To Assist' With Violence in Assam

BK1108164889 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] In Assam, the Army was called out to assist the civil administration at Purbajyoti Krishinigam area at Gohpur in (Sanikpur) District. The step was taken following arson and group clashes in about 12 villages in the area. Two persons were killed by Bodo activists at Lakhimpur Village. In about 10 villages thousands of people were rendered homeless as their houses were razed to the ground yesterday.

PTI quoting official sources reports that the people of these areas had fled their charred houses. Latest report said tension had gripped Gohpur and its adjoining areas as group clashes and arson continued. Senior police and civil officials with fresh police reinforcements have rushed to the areas.

In North Lakhimpur several Bodo extremists were injured when police opened fire to repulse the attack on a police camp.

Curfew After Clashes, Arson

BK1208033289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] In Assam, an indefinite curfew has been imposed in Gohpur area of Sonitpur District following unabated group clashes and arson during the last 2 days.

Official sources in Guwahati said yesterday that the Army has been called out to assist the civil administration in maintaining law and order. They said some Bodo [tribesmen] miscreants attacked a number of villagers in the area and burned down houses of hundreds of families. At least four persons were killed and many others injured, the sources said. Senior police officials with additional forces have rushed to the area and intensified security measures.

8 Policemen Killed in Bomb Blast

BK1208082289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] A UNI [UNITED NEWS OF INDIA] report from Guwahati says eight policemen were killed and four seriously injured when a powerful bomb exploded under their jeep near Udalgiri Village in Nalbari District of Assam last night. The injured have been admitted to the hospital. Further details are awaited.

Meanwhile, the situation in strife-torn Gohpur area of Sonitpur District is now under control. Indefinite curfew has been imposed there following large-scale group clashes in which at least four persons have lost their lives. Official sources said in Guwahati that Bodo [tribesmen] miscreants attacked a number of villagers in the area and burned down 12 villages. Over 5,000 villagers left their houses and have taken shelter in various camps set up at Gohpur. Army is assisting civil administration to maintain law and order.

Police Find 90 Bodies

BK1208145089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1438 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] New Delhi, AUg 12 (AFP)—Police have found the bodies of about 90 people killed in fights between tribals and non-tribals in the eastern state of Assam, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported Saturday. Most of those killed in the Ghopur area were women and children from the Bodo tribal community, PTI quoted officials as saying. The officials said the death toll could be higher.

Thousands of Bodo tribespeople have fled Assam, where Bodo militants have been campaigning for a separate state, after the communal clashes, the news agency said.

Delhi Radio Report

BK1208161889 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] A PTI report from Itanagar says that the Arunachal Pradesh police with the help of CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] have recovered 90 bodies of the victims massacred in group clashes at Gokul Town in Assam bordering Arunachal Pradesh. Police sources told the agency that the death figures might be higher. Most of the victims were women and children. Thousands of Bodos [tribals], who had lost their homes, have taken shelter in Arunachal Pradesh following the carnage.

Official sources said that about 60,000 people have crossed into Arunachal Pradesh during the escalated violence in the area from the 9th of this month.

Arunachal Pradesh Government has set up three temporary police posts in the vulnerable area of (Bajijan) circle of lower Subansari District.

Meanwhile, curfew continues in Gohpur area of Sonitpur District. The Assam home minister, Mr Brighu Kumar Phukan, today reviewed the situation at a high-level meeting in Guwahati and directed the state administration to take strong security measures.

The center has rushed a team of senior officials to Assam in the wake of violence incidents in Gohpur. An official spokesman said in New Delhi today that the team will visit the scene of violence and assess the situation. It will

coordinate with the authorities of two states to prevent recurrence of such incidents. He said the team will also look after relief and rehabilitation measures for the affected people.

Meanwhile six policemen were killed and five seriously injured in a powerful bomb planted by Bodo extremists in Udalgiri Village in Nalbari District last night. Official sources in Guwahati said that the bomb operated through a remote control device blew up a jeep carrying policemen on patrol duty. The injured have been admitted to the hospital. Senior police officials have rushed to the spot and started investigation.

Thousands Flee Assam

BK1308003089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1922 GMT 13 Aug 89

[By P.P. Ramachandran]

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 12 (AFP)—Police have found the bodies of nearly 100 people massacred in intercommunal violence in the eastern state of Assam, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported Saturday. Most of those killed in the fights in the Gohpur area were women and children from the Bodo tribal community, and some had been burned alive, PTI quoted officials as saying.

Some 60,000 people, mostly Bodos, have fled Gohpur to the neighboring state of Arunachal Pradesh since Wednesday, the news agency said, apparently after majority communities turned against the Bodos in Sonitpur and Sultanpur Districts.

The Army has been called out to restore order and a curfew clamped on the area, the UNITED NEWS OF INDIA (UNI) reported.

A government spokesman in Arunachal Pradesh said late Saturday that police had found "at least 95 bodies" in jungles bordering Assam, PTI reported from the state capital of Itanagar. The death toll could be "much higher" as details of the violence in remote villages were still coming in, he said, adding that the clashes took place in 23 villages which had been burned down. UNI said the violence had spread to 32 villages.

A spokesman for the Assam government denied the reports from Itangar, saying that only five people had been killed and a number of houses burned in the violence.

PTI quoted State Home Minister Bhrigu Kumar Phukan as saying in Gauhati, the Assamese capital, that Bodo activists campaigning for a homeland were responsible for the Gohpur incidents. Mr. Phukan, who had reviewed the situation with senior aides earlier, said the Bodos had been launching attacks on Assamese villages from neighbouring jungles in Arunachal Pradesh.

PTI said an unspecified number of people injured in the violence were hospitalised in Gohpur, Bishwanath and other areas of Assam. An additional 6,000 uprooted residents were given shelter in five relief camps set up in Gohpur, it said.

On Saturday, the federal government in New Delhi sent an inspection team of senior officials to Assam to survey the situation. The team, headed by Vinay Shankar, joint secretary in the federal Home Ministry, was to arrive at Gohpur Sunday, officials here said.

The news agencies did not say what communities were involved in the violence or how it started. But UNI did quote Arunchal Pradesh officials as saying the trouble at Gohpur erupted after reports of the rape of a girl there.

Earlier, local news reports said activists of the All-Bodo Students Union (ABSU) had been attacking non-tribal residents of the state.

Assam has a population of 22 million, of which tribal groups account for 1.4 million. The others are Assamese-speaking natives and Bengali-speaking people who migrated there from outside the state.

The ABSU began its campaign for a separate state in February based on charges that the state government was discriminating against tribespeople in employment and education. The separatists want the division of the oil-rich border state into two halves with the northern half reserved for tribals.

More than 150 people had died in violence linked to the separatist campaign before the discovery of the bodies in Assam.

In a related incident Saturday, eight policemen were killed and 12 injured when a remote-control bomb blew up their truck in the Nalbari District of Assam, PTI said. The blast, blamed on Bodo militants, took place in Udalguri village when the policemen were on routine patrol, it said.

Minister Puts Death Toll at 10

BK1308155989 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] The Assam chief minister, Mr Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, has appealed to the people in the riot-hit Gohpur area to maintain peace and harmony and help the administration to bring back normalcy. Talking to our Tezpur correspondent at Gohpur after visiting some relief camps today, Mr Mahanta expressed the hope that an amicable settlement of the Bodo problem [tribal movement for separate state] will be found at the forthcoming tripartite talks to be held outside Assam by the end of this month.

The chief minister has put the death toll in the recent group clashes in Gohpur at 10, describing the agency reports as exaggerated.

The state chief secretary told our correspondent that over 33 villages have been affected in Gohpur area due to arson, looting, and group clashes. He said the law and order machinery has been geared up to deal with the situation. Army is standing by to assist the civil administration. Curfew in the affected areas continues as a precautionary measure.

Assam Government Involved

BK1408045889 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0435 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] The All Bodo Students Union has accused the Asom Gana Parishad government of being instrumental in the killing of villagers in Gohpur area of Sonitpur District. In a statement issued in New Delhi yesterday, they urged the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, to immediately visit the strife-torn areas. They alleged that 200 persons have lost their lives in the past 5 days. However, the state chief minister, Mr Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, has put the death toll in the recent group clashes in Gohpur at 10.

Minister Denies Involvement

BK1408080289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] The home minister, Mr Buta Singh, has strongly refuted the allegations that the center is involved in the Bodo [tribesmen] agitation in Assam. Replying to the points raised by the members on the issue in the Rajya Sabha today, he also described as incorrect that the center is not helping the state government. The home minister asserted that next to Punjab, Assam government is getting the maximum help from the center. He said the allegations of the opposition are politically motivated.

Reiterating that the center is against the division of Assam and any type of violence, he appealed to the members not to jump at conclusions in a matter which is very serious. He assured the house that the center will help any state, irrespective of the fact whether it is ruled by the opposition, to maintain law and order. The Gurkhaland issue in West Bengal could not have been solved without the help of the center, he added.

Earlier, members from both the ruling and the opposition in the Rajya Sabha today expressed their serious concern over the large-scale killings in the Gohpur area in Assam. They said the center should assist the state government in maintenance of law and order.

In Assam, police in Sonitpur District have been put on red alert to protect vital industrial installations and to ensure public safety from extremist attack following large-scale group clashes in Gohpur area. The deputy commissioner told our Tezpur correspondent that prohibitory orders have been promulgated banning processions and carrying lethal weapons and disallowing assembly of more than four persons.

Sikh Militants Kill Former Minister; 8 Killed

BK1208140889 Hong Kong AFP in English 1357 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 12 (AFP)—Sikh militants gunned down a former state minister, his son and a former village chief while security forces shot dead four Sikh militants Saturday in the troubled northern Indian state of Punjab the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported. Piara Ram Dhanowali and his son were killed by two Sikh militants in Patiali village in Hosiapur District, PTI said.

Two Sikh militants barged into Mr. Dhanowali's farmhouse and after locking father and son in a room, shot them dead, the news agency said. Mr. Dhanowali's bodyguard and a relative, who were also present at the time, were spared, PTI added.

Militants also shot dead a former village chief near the Sikh holy city of Amritsar, PTI quoted police as saying. Another person, shot and wounded by militants in the town of Yamunanagar in neighbouring Haryana State Wednesday, died of his injuries Saturday, PTI said.

Security forces shot dead four Sikh militants in two shootouts Saturday, the news agency said.

Two Sikh militants were killed in Gujarpur village in Amritsar District and two in Jhamut village of Ludhiana District, PTI said, adding that four Chinese-made AK-47 assault rifles and some ammunition were found at the scene.

More than 850 people have died so far this year in violence linked to the Sikh separatists' campaign for an independent homeland called Khalistan or "Land of the Pure."

4 'Terrorists' Killed, 3 Arrested

BK1208150289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] In Punjab, a senior Congress-I leader and former state minister, Mr Pyeraram Dhanowali, has been shot dead. He was gunned down by a terrorist along with his son at a farm house near Hoshiarpur last night.

The security forces today killed four hardcore terrorists in separate encounters. According to official spokesmen, two hardcore terrorists were killed in village (Vijaypura) in Amritsar District this morning. One of them has been identified as dreaded terrorist, Gurmukh Singh, who carried a reward of 40,000 rupees on his head. Some arms and ammunition have been recovered from his possession.

The other two terrorists were killed in return of fire when they tried to ambush a police patrol party near (Jhamat) village in Ludhiana District.

Security forces also arrested three terrorists during raids on their hideouts.

Curfew Imposed in Varanasi Areas After Clashes
BK1408041689 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] In Uttar Pradesh, an indefinite curfew was imposed yesterday evening in some areas of Varanasi City following violent incidents. A police spokesman told our Lucknow correspondent that at least 20 persons, including 9 policemen, were injured in clashes between police and some processionists in Gauriganj locality. The incident occurred following a dispute over a procession route. Additional police forces have been deployed in the curfew-bound areas to maintain law and order. Several arrests have been made as a precautionary measure. The situation is stated to be tense, but under control.

Opposition Leader Accused of Demoralizing Troops
BK1308130089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] The information and broadcasting minister, Mr H.K.L. Bhagat, has decried the attempts of the Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Mr N.T. Rama Rao, to misuse his independence day message on AIR [All India Radio] and Doordarshan [television]. In a statement in New Delhi today, he said the message sent by Mr Rama Rao is a sterling example of negativism to sow discord and demoralize the valiant jawans [soldiers] of our Armed Forces. Mr Bhagat said the sentiments Mr Rama Rao expressed are a concoction of untruth which—apart from violating the broadcasting code—would do immense harm to our people and our society and to India's very existence as a sovereign, independent, and developing nation.

Mr Bhagat said Mr Rama Rao was invited to record his message, but without the offending paragraph. Instead of accepting, he has chosen to publicize a highly misleading and partisan version of events in order to rake up a controversy. Mr Bhagat said Mr Rama Rao is entitled to his views and can express them in the forums in his control. But he is not entitled and will not be permitted to misuse the chief minister's message on AIR and Doordarshan to demoralize the valiant jawans who dedicated their lives for the safety and security of the country.

Iran

Khamene'i Rejects Talks With United States
LD1408121489 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1038 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, this morning, during a gathering of a large number of families of POW's and MIA's said: Our nation is alert, alive, and strong. We do not need the American Government in order to rebuild our country. We will utilize our own resources to bring prosperity to the people and advance the revolution. If some people in the world think that our country's officials would beg the United States for help, they are absolutely mistaken; that will never happen.

He then recounted U.S. conspiracies and ploys in Lebanon. Referring to the recent kidnapping by the Zionist regime he said: The United States commits the most evil acts in Lebanon and encourages her lackey, Israel, to indulge in kidnapping and hostage-taking. Confident of U.S. support, the regime occupying Jerusalem is using hostage-taking to extort from Lebanese mojahedin and Muslims. As we have repeatedly declared, we do not support hostage-taking and condemn kidnappers such as the Phalangists, Israel, and the United States.

He called the kidnapping of Lebanese people from inside their country an extremely ugly deed. Saying that the conditions set by America for holding talks with Iran are ridiculous. Addressing U.S. leaders, Khamene'i said: Today, next to the usurper regime ruling over occupied Palestine, you are the most cursed government in the eyes of the Iranian people. No one in the Islamic Republic will hold talks with you.

Through the media, we censure America and declare that you will not be able to influence the Iranian people and authorities. So long as America's policies are based on lies, deception, and evil, and so long as it supports an evil regime like Israel and continues to commit injustices and oppress the oppressed nations, and so long as the crimes and acts of aggression committed by American leaders, such as shooting down of the passenger aircraft and freezing Iranian assets, are still remembered by our nation, in no way is it possible for us to hold talks or have contacts with the U.S. Government. We absolutely reject this.

The leader and the vali-ye amr [guardian of the order] of the Muslims urged the people to mantain their strength and reliance on God. He said: The Iranian nation is one of the strongest nations. By relying on this industrious, intelligent, active, and resourceful nation, coupled with the management skills and all-round efforts of the authorities, the problems will be solved. The enemy should know that these problems will not tire our nation.

Referring to the declaration of 13 August as the day of the POW's and MIA's, he said: One of the most tragic incidents in the history of Islam occurred on 13 August. Members of the prophet's family, who were among the most valued and honorable persons in the history of Islam, were captured. Their capture was unprecedented. Among the captured were women whose honor and value were unparalleled in the Islamic society of that era. Those who captured those dear ones were estranged from

Islam. They were among the most evil and malicious people of their time. That tragedy will remain in our minds forever as the bitterest of memories.

In the same section of his speech, the leader of the Islamic revolution stressed the important role of the families of the martyrs, POW's, those missing in action, and the selfless devotees [war disabled] in guarding the honor of the revolution. Addressing them, he said: You are among the strata of the people who serve the revolution, and a source of honor and dignity for your country. If you are patient, you will be rewarded by God. That in itself is a source of great pride for you.

Stating that the names of our POW's will remain eternal in the history of the revolution and Iran, he said: Our POW's have preserved the honor of Islam, the country, and the revolution in the most difficult circumstances. Because of inner strength, they have not bowed their heads before their enemy. They have been able to frustrate the enemy through the preservation of honor, inner strength, and their faith. That in itself reveals that the dear fighters for Islam are brave and strong, not only on the battlefield but also in captivity.

Our country's leader described the enemy's (?obstructionism) and the ill will of the Iraqi regime's leaders as an obstacle to the establishment of a lasting peace, and added: The enemy will not be able to use our dear POW's as an instrument for bullying and for forcing the Iranian nation in to giving concessions. If our nation wanted to give concessions and accept anyone's bullying, it would not have had a revolution nor fought for 8 years.

Today, Iraq is not a neighboring country which imposed 8 years of war on us; rather it is just the United States and the West. [sentence as heard] Today, those world-devourers, who have had their wings clipped with the uprising of the Iranian nation, have the intention of making us surrender by pushing Iraq forward. However, the Iranian nation will not succumb to bullying and we will stand up to the United States and all superpowers.

Speaking of Iran's continuing efforts for bringing to fruition the issue of the full implementation of UN Resolution 598, and the peace talks, his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i said: Withdrawal to recognized international borders must precede any other action. If withdrawal takes place, we are prepared to undertake direct talks. However, the Iraqi regime has shown that it is an illogical and unreasonable regime. It wants to deprive the Iranian nation of its right to sovereignty within its borders, but we are not prepared to negotiate over the rights of our nation.

Concluding his speech, the leader of the Islamic revolution prayed for the most rapid release of POW's and MIA's, and for patience and endurance for their honorable families.

The meeting was attended by families of POW's and MIA's from Tehran, Karaj, Varamin, Qom, Kashan, Zanjan and Ahvaz, and also by a number of freed POW's. Miri, the head of the committee for POW's and MIA's, delivered a short speech. He praised the honorable families of the POW's and MIA's, and said: These dear ones have always asked that the country's officials stand up to the enemy's unjust and illegitimate demands, and that Resolution 598 be implemented in full. Released POW's, too, have brought messages from their captive friends, saying: The Islamic Republic of Iran must not succumb to the enemy's illegitimate demands.

Before the meeting, a ceremony of dirge singing and eulogizing was held to commemorate the martyrdom of the lord of the martyrs and the leader of the world's free-thinkers, his holiness Aba 'Abdallah al-Husayn—may God's peace be upon him.

U.S. Position on Assets, Hostages Criticized

LD1308210189 Tehran IRNA in English 2053 GMT 13 Aug 89

["U.S. Desperately Attempts To Undermine Iran's Humanitarian Intentions"—IRNA headline]

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 13, IRNA—The U.S. officials, the press and other mass media are trying, in compliance with their plots against the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI], to suggest a connection between the hostage crisis in Lebanon and Iran and thus pose the question to the IRI that why it does not show its good-will and use its influence among the Lebanese Muslims to secure the release of the hostages.

A strange phenomenon, indeed. The U.S. Government has forcibly confiscated Iran's assets in that country and refuses to release them without having any justified legal and international reasons for its action, and more so still expects the Islamic Republic to show good-will.

There is one basic question which must be raised here: What is the connection between the hostage issue and the Islamic Republic's frozen assets? Our properties have been confiscated by force and must be unfrozen immediately whether there is any hostage in Lebanon or not.

Why the world is not asking the U.S. which claims to be an example of the 20th century democracy, that why it has forcibly seized the assets of an oppressed nation and refrains from releasing them without having any legal and political justification?

Therefore, principally the issue of good-will regarding unfreezing Iran's assets and showing good intentions in using influence among the Lebanese Muslims to release the hostages are two different issues by nature and have no connection whatsoever with each other.

Regarding Iran's properties, the confiscator is known, that is, the U.S. Government, while there is no reason for continuation of this seizure at all. It is only the hegemony and bullying of a superpower which causes these assets to remain frozen.

Turning to the hostage issue, first of all the hostages are not held by Iran and those holding them are unknown and underground groups and organisations. Secondly, the influence Iran has on these groups is merely spiritual which in certain cases in the past has proved effective.

But it is likely this time this influence would not be productive because it also depends on the interests of the Lebanese Muslims, including a halt to the interferences of the U.S. and Israel in the country and an end to the pressures and oppressions imposed on them. The most important of these is the current war in Lebanon which as a matter of regret takes several innocent lives each day while the U.S. Government remains completely heedless.

If the U.S. Government really wants to solve the hostage ordeal in Lebanon and has no plot in mind, it should first put Israel under pressure to free Shaykh 'Abd al-Karim 'Ubayd at once. Secondly, it should present a comprehensive plan for the release of all the hostages, including the Iranian ones and the Lebanese captives held by Israel.

Naturally, if the U.S. Administration fulfills its legal responsibility in releasing Iran's assets, the Islamic Republic too, despite regarding the move a legal duty of Washington, is ready to take the action as a good-will gesture and use its maximum influence for the release of all the hostages. It would also ask the oppressed Lebanese Muslims to take new steps towards solving the hostage crisis under the condition that the resolution of the ordeal would be a first step towards settling the Lebanese people's essential issues, the return of independence to the country, and restoration of the rights of its Muslims.

Velayati To Leave for Damascus Talks on Lebanon
LD1408091189 Tehran IRNA in English 0802 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 14, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati will leave here Monday afternoon for Damascus at the head of a delegation to hold talks with Syrian officials on the Lebanese crisis.

During the visit, Velayati will confer with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' on bilateral and regional issues, the Lebanese question in particular.

While in Damascus, he will also hold talks with Lebanese and Palestinian combatant groups.

'Source' Denies Pakistani Minister To Mediate
LD1408121789 Tehran IRNA in English 1135 GMT 14 Aug 89

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 14, IRNA—Pakistani Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan will arrive in Tehran Tuesday for talks on mutual ties and the issue of Afghanistan, an informed source at the Foreign Ministry said Monday.

The source also refuted some foreign media reports alleging that Yaqub Khan's visit was aimed at mediating between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the U.S. in relation to the American hostages held in Lebanon.

Former Khomeyni Aide Says U.S. Prime Enemy
LD1308121189 Tehran IRNA in English 1135 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 13, IRNA—The United States should always be seen as the Islamic Republic's "foreign enemy number one" because that was the way the late Imam Khomeyni saw it, an aide has stressed.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad 'Ali Ansari also underlined the imam's support for the poor and hatred of the rich. "The imam... did not think of anything but supporting and serving the poor and never stood up in favor of money-worshipping capitalists," he said.

Ansari who worked in the imam's office before his death in June and has been put in charge of collecting the imam's writings, was addressing a massive gathering at the imam's shrine in south Tehran. The huge gathering marked 'Ashura, the anniversary of Imam Husayn's (a.s.) [God's peace be upon him] martyrdom—one of the most important occasions in the Shi'a Muslim calendar.

Ansari said it was necessary to preserve the imam's clear and explicit line on every issue, especially in foreign policy. "The imam's line was and is to struggle against the United States," he stressed.

"We must always see the United States as the number one foreign enemy of the Islamic revolution and seriously avoid internal enemies such as the liberals."

Ansari called on 'ulema and thinkers to organize Imam Khomeyni's ideas on all political, social and economic issues in order to combat "Americanized Islam".

Husayn, the third imam of Shi'a Muslims, was Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) grandson who was martyred along with 72 of his followers in an unequal battle for leadership in the desert of Karbala' in today's Iraq in 680 A.D. To commemorate the tragedy Shi'a Muslims in Iran and many other Middle East countries as well as in Pakistan and India organize special mourning ceremonies and public rallies.

This year, many of the rallies from local mosques in Tehran ended at the imam's shrine near Behesht-e Zahra cemetery.

More on Ansari Speech

LD1308191289 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1700 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Excerpts] On the 'Ashura of the lord of martyrs and leader of the world's free thinkers, his holiness Husayn, the son of 'Ali—may God's peace be upon him—Islamic Iran is plunged into mourning. The mourning people of Tehran, in the company of our other mourning compatriots who have come from the provinces to participate in the ceremonies in Tehran, have moved along in various mourning convoys and groups from the early hours of this morning. They mourned at the blessed shrine of His Eminence Imam Khomeyni. [passage omitted]

After the reading of passages from the holy Koran, the devotees of Aba 'Abdallah al-Husayn, may God's peace be upon him, sang dirges and mourned. Afterward, Mr Ansari, the head of Imam Khomeyni's cultural organizations and of the shrine headquarters, delivered a speech. In the gathering of mourners, Hojjat ol-Eslam Ansari spoke of his eminence the imam's devotion to the lord of martyrs, His Holiness Aba 'Abdallah al-Husayn, may God's peace be upon him, saying: His Eminence Imam Khomeyni, may his noble dust be sanctified, in order to realize the aims of Imam Husayn, may God's peace be upon him, introduced his holiness as an international personality and a model for battle and jihad to the world's free thinkers. He thus brought about a greater concern in Muslims for pure Mohammadan Islam. He created in the people a self-confidence for victory.

He added: In the Islamic revolution, His Eminence Imam Khomeyni, by following the movement of His Holiness Imam Husayn, was able to instill in the people trust, love, and belief in the Islamic guardianship of society [velayat]. Throughout these 11 years, despite the opposition of East and West, he drove the Islamic revolution forward. [mourners chants]

Emami-Kashani Delivers Friday Prayers Sermon

LD1108154189 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1219 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Second sermon delivered by Hojjat ol-Eslam Emami-Kashani at Tehran University on 11 August—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The issue which I will briefly discuss in this sermon is our elections. The referendum on the constitutional amendments and the presidential elections taught the world a reality. It even taught it to those inside the country, including us, even though our great imam—may his status be exalted—incessantly referred to this reality but, as the saying goes: seeing is believing. In the wake of the imam's demise—may God's benediction be upon him—we witnessed a referendum and presidential elections; an extensive presence of the nation, which indicated that our revolution is linked to the will of the nation, and not to the leader, an individual, or individuals, just as the imam—may his status be exalted—incessently remarked. The nation's will was not just any will, but a will and belief which had grown in the school of islam. It indicated that what maintains a revolution is the people. It is the people who possess religious beliefs and Islamic growth.

I will tell you a story related to me by an observant member of the Council of Guardians. He said: When I arrived at one of the ballot boxes, I noticed a very long line. The weather was hot, and a number of women and old men were at the back of the line. So we decided to swap places with them and suggested it to them. But they replied that the more heat they suffer, the greater their reward would be.

This is our nation, and the elections showed this reality, without resorting to propaganda. This was seen by the entire nation, and some of the mass media even admitted it. The people rushed to the ballot boxes to cast their decisive votes for that constitution, and for that dear and honorable brother of ours, the president, and before that for the issue of leadership. It is true that those wise men, meaning the experts, assembled and chose the leader, but it was the great strata of people who by their extensive presence in gatherings, mosques, in groups, or individually, extended such a welcome to our dear leader, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i—may his blessings continue. [crowd chants support] This is indicative of society's progress, the nation's progress.

At this point I would like to point out two issues. The first is that now that our nation has shown such growth, and the world has learned that this is pledged to Islam, we should act in such a way as to maintain this belief, so that the mosques of the Islamic world will resemble ours, so that the religious gatherings of the Islamic countries will resemble ours. It should not be that we—God forbid—may retreat. Our mosques, Islamic history, ethics, our Husaynite mosques, and Islamic discourses should stay active. We are now in the reconstruction era. I hope, God willing, that our dear brother Hashemi-Rafsanjani will be successful and carry out reconstruction with the help of the people and those forces who, God willing, are aware of where the problem lies and how it should be resolved. Fortunately, his excellency is well informed as a result of ample experiences—especially from an economic viewpoint, as well as other issues so that, God willing, the country will be rescued from this problem.

I see great reward for all those who indeed serve this nation and country. Contrary to what some of our opponents believe, that it is a case of rank, class, and ruthlessness, I believe since I control a section of it that it involves hardship and misery, all of which would be insane, if it was not done for the sake of God. I hope that

we will move toward the improvement of the country's economic and financial growth. Before that, however, I would like to point out that reconstruction should begin from within us. It is our inner selves which precipitated the revolution. It was the morale of our youth which promoted those conditions. There should be such reconstruction and such spiritualism.

The only way we can conquer all our obstacles is through self-construction. Once we construct our inner self then we can naturally improve our politics, economics, and social issues. We will achieve growth in all our issues. Our houses will be centers of light and piety for the wife, husband, and children, instead of the center of quarreling. The reconstruction should take place inside all of us. This is the great jihad. I hope that, God willing, the war will end, and that the enemy will no longer harbor any intentions of war. We should maintain our country as that of the country of Imam Husayn, the country of self-sacrifices and sincerity. We should maintain this for our day of judgment, for our grave, and so that we may be honored in history. We should not lapse in morality. there are several levels in hell, and one lapses one level after another, and not suddenly. May God grant us piety and preserve us from sin and avarice. [crowd chants support]

Another issue I would like to mention is in connection with the issues of Lebanon and Palestine. It is that very religious belief and character-building in our country, and the spirit and belief of our great imam--may God exalt his status—which drove those thoughts away from our country and borders. Now, the issues of Lebanon and Palestine are based on religious beliefs, even though the issue of nationalism, love of one's country, has its own bearings. But all those self-sacrificing acts of these youths and dear Muslims are based on those Islamic beliefs. That usurper Israel, its mercenaries, its supporters, and the world arrogance should be aware that with that very Islamic belief which exists in Lebanon and Palestine aggression and tyranny have come to an end, God willing. [crowd chants: "Death to America!," "Death to Israel!," "Death to England!," and "Death to the mojahedin!"]

The enemy should find a constructive solution. It should consider the realities and should save the region from the heat of clashes, war, and such a pathetic situation. It should do so through reason and wisdom, and not through deceit, tyranny, and craftiness. Otherwise, the Islamic nation and ummah will fight on, and all the Muslims in the world are obliged to place their pens, steps, and words, at the disposal of those oppressed, and to wipe out the evil face of Israel from history. This is an obligation for all Muslims.

In conclusion of my sermon, I invite myself and everyone to observe piety and to abstain from sins. I also express my condolences on the demise of the honorable mother of our dear leader, who was indeed a virtuous lady and, as far as I am aware, performed her religious duties and abstained from what is forbidden. I hope that God may exalt that lady's status.

Khamene'i Restores Montazeri's Religious Duties

TA1108180989 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 1630 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] On the recommendation of Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, the religious responsibilities of Ayatollah Montazeri will be restored to him. Official reports in this connection indicate that Ayatollah Montazeri will soon resume giving lessons in Qom's theological seminary and that his followers and devotees will have permission to attend his classes and meet with him.

It is said in Tehran's informed circles that Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i's decision to restore Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri's reputation has strongly angered the clique of Ahmad Khomeyni and 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi. With this decision, 'Ali Meshkini, who during the past several months had become the sole contender in Qom, will again be overshadowed.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani To 'Dismiss' Mohtashemi

TA1108181289 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 1630 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] It is being said in Tehran's informed political circles that in all likelihood 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi will not be a member of Hashemi-Rafsanjani's future cabinet. It is being said that in the exchange of views between Khamene'i and Hashemi-Rafsanjani in recent days, it was jointly decided to dismiss 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi from the Ministry of Interior.

Hostage Issue 'First Test' for New President

NC1208155289 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 7 Aug 89 p 16

['A. Marvi commentary: "The Hostage Issue: The First Test of the New President's Foreign Policy"]

[Excerpts] The Israeli Government's abduction of Lebanese Shiite cleric Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd, which ostensibly resulted in the killing of one American hostage in Lebanon and a threat against the life of another by the "Revolutionary Justice Organization," with a concomitant acceleration of diplomatic efforts on the regional and international levels to resolve the hostage issue in the Middle East and the dispatch of U.S. warships to the eastern Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, has partially opened the "door" for Iranian cooperation to stem the exacerbation of tension and resolve the hostage issue. This once again highlights the fact that Israel's policy of terrorism, which continues with the unbridled and unconditional support of Washington, is the underlying cause of the violent and sanguinary developments in the region. [passage omitted]

The fact that the Islamic revolution of Iran enjoys moral influence in the Lebanon is obvious, but one must note that there are several factors which limit this Iranian influence. Furthermore, certain regional policies which are actively working against Iran exist in Lebanon. It has been repeatedly stated in the past years that the issue of the Western hostages in Lebanon is a crucial one, one which can open the way to an easing of tension and the normalization of relations between Iran and the Western countries in general. [passage omitted]

It is essential to mention two points in this context:

1. The U.S. Government has displayed a cautious and watchful attitude in the recent hostage crisis and has thus far prevented the further aggravation of the situation. By adopting a policy of negotiations with all parties involved it has proved that it is ready to face up to the realities of the region.

2. On the other hand, it appears that the hostage issue has become the first test of the foreign policy of the new Iranian president, Hashemi-Rafsanjani, and this fact in itself indicates the delicate nature of his efforts in resolving the latest crisis in a manner that does not disturb the equilibrium between the Iranian revolution's long-term interests and our country's regional considerations in Lebanon. Hashemi-Rafsanjani's statements, which stress the need to resolve the issue entirely by diplomatic efforts, are in fact proof that Iran condemns all actions that are of a "terrorist nature." This means in general that as far as Iran is concerned the only solution is justice.

If the Western world decries the holding of its citizens hostage in Lebanon, it should also explicitly condemn Israeli aggression in the region, of which the abduction of Shaykh 'Ubayd is only one example, as well as of the abduction of Iranian citizens. The U.S. Government is concerned about its prestige in the Middle East and is terrified of its citizens being held hostage. However, the latest crisis has affirmed that it is the U.S. foreign policy which has been taken hostage by the Israeli terrorists.

In any case, a favorable atmosphere, fraught with cautious optimism, has surfaced for a solution of the hostage problem and Iran is merely one of the many parties in this "game." In view of the fact that the execution sentence for Ciccipio has been suspended and the remarks by Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani have been effective in bringing about this favorable atmosphere, it may be said that the time has come for the Bush administration to take some steps, such as exerting pressure on Israel to release Shaykh 'Ubayd and lifting the freeze on Iranian assets in the United States.

If the Bush administration desires a solution to this "complex and chronic" problem, it should move toward a more positive stance and should refrain from using the values of justice and civilization to suit its own ends. Only then can one be hopeful of a resolution of the hostage issue and other related issues, although not with the speed that some imagine.

President's Office Denies London TIMES Report

NC1208104489 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 7 Aug 89 pp 1, 6

[Excerpts] The office of President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani yesterday denied SUNDAY TIMES of London alleged report that the Iranian president had sent a message to U.S. President George Bush. "No, we deny the report," an official at the Presidential Office told the TEHRAN TIMES.

The DEUTSCHE PRESSE AGENTUR (DPA) in a dispatch from London yesterday quoted the SUNDAY TIMES as reporting that Hashemi-Rafsanjani had sent his message three days before he took office. He took oath of his office on Thursday.

"It's a bundle of lies and there is no truth in it," the official told the TEHRAN TIMES. He said, "Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani's stand is the same what he mentioned in his Friday prayer sermon in Tehran last Friday."

Addressing the worshippers Hashemi-Rafsanjani gave a comprehensive account of the developments in Lebanon and the recent crisis triggered by the Israeli abduction of Lebanese alim [Scholar] Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd on last Friday. [passage omitted]

"This time," Hashemi-Rafsanjani said, "the U.S. should use its head" and he offered the asistance of the Islamic Republic of Iran in this task.

"Come and be reasonable. We will also help to solve the issue (of Lebanon) so that the people of the region can live in peace and quiet," Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed his opinion on the subject.

Observers here firmly believe that Hashemi-Rafsanjani's offer for the assistance to help defuse the present problem is conditional. He drew the attention of the West and specially the United States that priority attention should be given to the crux of the problem and that is "justice to the people of Lebanon" whose basic social, political, economic and religious rights have been trampled upon for the last many many years.

According to Hashemi-Rafsanjani if the Lebanon problem is solved the other problems concerning this Mediterranean country will also be solved automatically.

'Source Close to President' on Assets, Hostages

NC1208101789 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 8 Aug 89 pp 1, 5

[Text] A source close to President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani yesterday conditionally accepted the proposal of U.S. President George Bush on the release of the Iranian assets.

The source who preferred to remain anonymous told the TEHRAN TIMES that the U.S. proposal should be concrete and there should be convincing grounds that these proposals will be translated into action.

He was commenting on a report of the SUNDAY EXPRESS of London which in its Sunday edition reported that the U.S. President Bush offered Iran that his administration will unfreeze the Iranian assets of billions of dollars which were freezed by that country in 1980.

The source said, "Well you know, earlier too the officials of the United States made proposals on the issue which never materialized."

Bush, according to the SUNDAY EXPRESS said that the Iranian assets will be freed if the Western hostages in Lebanon are released.

The source close to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said, "It's a well-known fact that we do not have any direct or indirect hand in hostage taking."

"It's a fact which has been announced by the officials several times," he said, adding "Of course we have spiritual influence in Lebanon which we can use in our efforts for the release of the hostages there."

"And moreover, there are very many doubts in the minds of the people of Iran about the U.S. Administration so if the White House really wants that Iran should try for the release of the hostages it will be proper if such a statement as appeared in the London weekly be announced officially by Washington.

"The first step should be taken by the United States and if Tehran gets satisfied that its assets will certainly be unfreezed then the second step will definitely come from Iran," he said.

"We can use our influence in Lebanon for the release of the hostages there," he said and pointed out that "no guarantee can be given that the Western hostages will definitely be released because Iran has limited influence among the Lebanese groups. [no close quotation marks as published]

Editorial on 'Purely Humanitarian' Position

NC1208132289 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 7 Aug 89 p 2

[Editorial: "Iran Serious in Its Humanitarian Call"]

[Text] Lebanon's Hizballah in a statement yesterday denied that it had any direct or indirect hand in the issue of hostages in Lebanon and this came at a time the West was putting every kind of blames on Islamic groups and particularly the Shiites for the latest developments in that country.

We have to remember well that on last Friday Iran's newly elected President Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani offered to help solve the Lebanon crisis and apparently the West got it wrongly all over again. His offer, however, was clear and straightforward. He said that if they behaved sensibly and logically, Iran would be willing to help.

The reaction although a bit hasty was that the White House did not understand clearly what Iranian offer meant. The clarity of the proposal left no doubt that the U.S. Administration is trying to turn a blind eye to the most logical approach to solve the problem from a purely humanitarian point of view. Then there was news pouring in to the effect that the Iranian Government has sent messages to the Bush Administration failing to appreciate that the case has nothing to do with Iran in the first place and that Tehran will elp if and when it receives signs indicating the parties desire to settle the case amicably.

Being an Islamic state the Government of Iran can under no circumstances advocate the hostage-taking as a means to solve any disputes wherever it may arise, and that Iran's assistance is simply due to the humanitarian stand it holds so dear.

As a matter of principle Iran believes that all hostages irrespective of their nationalities should be immediately released and that of course it includes Iranian hostages kidnapped years ago in Lebanon. The fact that Iran will help for a fair and just settlement of the crisis does not necessarily mean that Iran has any direct or indirect link to the case. It is a naive idea to expect any message written or verbal being sent by Iranian officials to any American or non-American head of states. The fact that Iran favors an immediate settlement to the case if coupled with the same inclination on the part of Americans should not give rise to the unfounded suspicions at all.

To resolve the current crisis all the parties with some interest must unite in adopting a realistic and humanitarian strategy and then hope for results accelerating the release of all the people in captivity. To do so, all individual interests must be set aside to prevent the

crisis from turning into an episode of regional or international conflict. Unless and until this fact is realized the situation could explode into a dangerous development that may change the current balance in international relations.

Islamic Republic of Iran, as made clear by its new president, is ready to carry its historical responsibility and work for the benefit of those in danger, since Iran is not only concerned about the well-being of the Muslims but also about all human beings and their sufferings.

'Ubayd Abduction Strengthens Amal-Hizballah Unity

NC1108212189 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 3 Aug 89 pp 1, 4

[Editorial: "Terrorists Who Take Pleasure"]

[Text] The news on the abduction of the combatant Friday imam of Jibshit enraged the world of islam against the Zionists, and events led to the execution of an American hostage and subsequent incidents.

But, frankly speaking, what was the reaction by the world of arrogance to the news on the abduction by Israel? In other words, what was the reaction by the centers of power which consider themselves to be the centers of civilization and humanity? How did those, who today hypocritically weep in their castles over their misfortune in having lost an American or British hostage, react previously to the news of the Zionists' criminal act of abducting Shaykh 'Ubayd?

Let Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd be martyred just like Shaykh Raghib Harb was by the Zionists and their elements, or let him face a capitivity in which each moment will be like martyrdom. It is known beforehand that the world-devourers intended and intend to prevent the tree of virtue and the strong and fruit-yielding tree which was planted by Imam Khomeyni in the world of Islam to grow so that its branches will spread beyond the walls and yield fruit.

They martyred 'Arif Hussaini in Pakistan for this very purpose. They martyred him so that they would cut off that branches of this tree of virtue. They had identified Muhammad Baqir Sadr, who was another strong tree, much before that and martyred him for the same purpose. We should be prepared to see similar acts in other places too.

But the interesting point is that some American and European officials were neither able to officially confirm the terrorist act by the beastly Israeli regime and remained silent, nor wanted to go beyond the limits of formality and diplomacy. Thus they merely resorted to a general phraseology of artificial, misleading, and harmless condemnations.

Do the governments of America, Britain, and Europe in general not consider themselves the strugglers against terrorism, and especially state terrorism? Where have all those continuous uproars and all-round attacks gone that call for the need for economic sanctions, threaten to sever relations, ban the sale of arms and ammunition, take punitive measures, and other such moves usually heard in the name of confronting state terrorism?

Should we not consider Imam Khomeyni's words in his testament describing the U.S. Government as a "terrorist who takes pleasure" to be completely justified? Under the aegis of which beliefs and which powers do the governments of Israel and of Michel 'Awn—that want to turn Lebanon into a second Israel—perpetrate such crimes? Where have those people who consider the U.S. and British Governments to be the defenders of freedom and human rights and the opponents of terrorism gone?

Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for the recent act by the Zionist regime was to bare its teeth at the Hizballah-Amal alliance in Lebanon. But undoubtedly these savage acts will only lead to the consolidation of the unity of the combatant, independent, and national Muslims on the one hand, and to the consolidation of the all-aspected struggle against Israel on the other.

TEHRAN TIMES on Iran-U.S. Relations

NC1208111889 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 8 Aug 89 p 2

[Editorial: "Right Intentions and Thoughts Needed From Washington"]

[Text] Today once more the Irano-U.S. relations are being featured prominently in the major political debates and the international media seem bent upon highlighting the pros and cons of the issue.

The renewed heated discussion over Tehran-Washington expected reactions started with the Israel's abduction of Lebanese 'Alim Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd on July 28. The abduction resulted in the announced death of U.S. Marine Officer Lt. Colonel Higgins by the Organization of the World Oppressed.

We have experienced in the past that whenever the U.S. hostages faced death threats by their captors the U.S. Administration responded with messages for Tehran through different channels.

The idea behind these messages was either to threaten Iran or to lure this Islamc country for some sort of concessions. However, President George Bush has resorted to threats much lesser than his predecessor, Ronald Reagan. But it is to be noted that the U.S. President is under severe pressures of his Republican Party hawks on the issue. To satisfy both party and non-party hawks President Bush is trying to do something in this regard.

After severance of Irano-U.S. diplomatic relations in 1980, the two governments have not been able to find a common platform for resolving their political differences. The major obstacle is U.S. itself who since severance of relations has not proposed any practical sincere approach, required to resolve the difficulties.

The other important problem is the harsh stance of the U.S. Governent with regard to the Islamic Revolution. In case of Iranian assets for example, it has blocked their release without any legitimate reason and has not shownany sincere intentions in this regard.

If the U.S. keeps such a stance particularly at a time when Iran needs its own assets desperately for reconstruction of the country, how could it expect from a revolutionary state to step down from its fundamental principles. Compromise with the oppressors is the same as the lamb and wolf relationship and incompatible with the fundamental principles of the revolution.

At the same time, as the officials of the Islamic Republic have said repeatedly, the doors are not completely closed and the right intentions and thoughts can help resolve the problems.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI on President's Tasks

NC1108121189 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 5 Aug 89 pp 1, 10

[Editorial: "With the New President"]

[Excerpts] The grand ceremony to endorse the presidential decree designating Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani as president by Ayatollah Khamene'i, the great leader of the Islamic revolution, which was held at the Hoseynieh-ye Jamaran the day before yesterday, marked a turning point in the history of the Islamic revolution. [passage omitted]

On this momentous occasion, it would be useful to mention certain points of which the new president is also aware, but which need further emphasis:

1. As the two great personages (the leader and the president) have mentioned and the discussion of present problems at the Hoseyniyeh-ye Jamaran ceremony concluded, what is essential to the people of Iran is the safeguarding of the ideals of the Islamic revolution, the continuation of the imam's line, and the implementation of the illustrious tenets of pure Mohammadan Islam.

A resolution of economic problems must come within the framework of the guardianship of the revolution's ideals. The people will never sacrifice their principles for the sake of material benefit or to solve their wordly problems, and will in fact consider any such thing unimaginable! [passage omitted]

2. The fact that a new way has been opened for resolving the problems of society does not mean that a miracle will come to pass. This is something our people know very well and it is for this reason that they do not have any unreasonable expectations of the new president. Therefore, there is no need for hasty measures. The fact is that the existing problems can only be resolved with planning at the grass roots level

3. Resorting to some short-term measures may be expedient temporarily but it is important to note that both short-term and long-term measures will only prove effective and beneficial if, during the course of their implementation, there are no devious practices or discrimination and if all efforts to capitalize on the measures are dealt with firmly. Without this, there is no doubt that every step will benefit the opportunists and plunderers and will add to the magnitude of the problem. [passage omitted]

4. The need to combat wrong trends that are in conflict with an Islamic and revolutionary culture and that are manipulated by fanning of values opposed to our culture should not be ignored. [passage omitted]

5. When resolution of problems is mentioned nowadays, there are some with ulterior motives who endeavor to cast indirect aspersions on the present government's sincere performance in the most difficult conditions of war and economic embargoes, despite the fact that this government was able to shoulder the heavy burden of the country's administration with absolute success and to record this great honor with genuine and industrious services in the book of the revolution and the history of this nation.

The present president is aware of this reality more than anyone else. An expression of appreciation to the competent workers will help combat the base motives of the opportunists and thus teach a lesson of appreciation to others in the future.

Editorial on New President's Cabinet Choices

NC1208112189 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in Enlgish 6 Aug 89 p 2

[Text] Everything is now in place for the selection of a new cabinet, which will be the executive arm of a government by the just elected President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hashemi-Rafsanjani. He will have either to make his selections from names suggested to him by a conglomeration of factions with differing views, or cutting across this method pick up men who in his opinion will be most suited to carry through government policies in the most efficient and effective ways and in an highly coordinated effort for the best results.

If Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani is going to adopt the first method, the ultimate composition of the cabinet will be very like a cabinet in a coalition government. From all previous political experiences and past knowledge of

operations of political coalitions, it is clear that this form has been adopted by a country only when compelled to, under conditions of instability and disagreement in policy and party lines. A coalition is a palliative to ensure stability for as long as a government can or will last.

But for Iran, which in all major respects is a country that is politically stable and free from conflict or tensions at the higher levels of the political complex, a coalition form would be incongruous and unsuitable. In Iran the expectations now are for a presidential government capable of carrying through much needed major economic reforms within a stable political climate. Hence, it will be more advisable and certainly a great advantage for the president to select his ministers from among men who will be best fitted to carry through and be in agreement with the president on the policies and the manner of their implementation in their fullest extent.

As for various factions with group interests interested in pushing their individual claims forward, if they become insistent, they will only bring about a result wherein a cabinet will come to represent a diversity of views, diverging on how to government on the courses they wish to follow.

It will be best for these factions and group interests to set aside their interests in the larger interests of the nation and engage in forming themselves into fully-fledged parties with clear cut policies. There is all the difference in the world between groups interested in pushing forward small, or parochial interests and a party with well defined objectives which the people can know, understand and endorse or reject during an election. The ideas and policies of small groups can only cover short-term micro goals, whereas fully formed parties are best suited to represent broad, defined political, economic, national and even global objectives at the macro level.

It is our hope that all such groups following their own individual interests, however laudable, will yet not pressure the president but make way for him to do his utmost for the nation and the objectives of the Islamic Revolution.

KEYHAN on Oman's Role in Gulf Security

LD1108140889 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 12 Jul 89 p 22

[Editorial by M. Faraz: "The Security of the Persian Gulf Can be Achieved Without the Interference of Foreigners"]

[Text] James Baker, secretary of state of the Bush government, arrived in Muscat last Saturday on his first trip to an Arab country since taking up his post. He will discuss matters of mutual interest with officials in Oman. He was on his way from India to Holland and France. Before meeting with the Omani minister of state in charge of foreign affairs, he met with Oman's number two official, the deputy prime minister in charge of military and security affairs.

According to news agency reports, Sultan Qabus, who had left Oman to take part in the Arab heads of state summit in Casablanca, has not yet returned to his own country. The visit of the U.S. secretary of state at this time and in the absence of Qabus could be important. The news agencies have yet to print anything new about the talks between Baker and Omani officials, but Persian Gulf analysts believe that one of the most important topics under discussion would have been the renewal of the 10-year-old agreement between the United States and the Sultanate of Oman on the U.S. use of military bases in Oman, which was signed in 1980. Baker's meeting with the Omani official in charge of security gives credibility to this line of thought.

During the past 10 years the Americans have tried—especially at the peak of the tanker war—to secure Oman's unconditioned agreement to the use of its bases, but this effort has so far been unsuccessful. At the moment the agreement is about to expire at the same time as the region has taken major positive steps to ensure its own security without the presence of foreign elements and forces. In this line with this all Western warships will eventually have to leave the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.

The MIDDLE EAST magazine in its May issue praised Omani foreign policy, especially at the climax of the tanker war, and wrote: In the war of the tankers, Oman made a big effort to avoid clashes. The magazine quoted Oman's deputy foreign minister as saying: Sultan Qabus had ordered the Omani Navy not to have any contact with the Iranian gunboats pursuing the tankers.

In reality, relations between Oman and Iran cooled after the Islamic revolution because of that regime's close ties with the shah. But these relations entered a new phase in 1985. At present, political relations between Iran and Oman are at a high level compared to other nations on the shores of the Persian Gulf.

Last February our minister of heavy industries visited that country to attend the first meeting to sign an economic and trade agreement between the two nations. Recent news indicates that the Omani deputy prime minister in charge of military and security affairs has been invited to visit the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Right now the Omanis have to show that they are willing to see this region move toward stability and security. They should seriously avoid any decisions that would harm this cause. This region belongs to the people of this area, and the stability and security of this region should be provided by these same people. The countries of the region are moving toward all-out cooperation, without the interference of foreigners. Therefore, any action that would harm this trend should be avoided.

Baker's trip to the area and his visit to Oman should be a cause for concern, although it seems very unlikely that Oman would give a positive response to potential American demands to renew the agreement between the two countries on the use of military bases and for more points in this regard. This is something that does not match the realities that exist.

There are many signs that the region is beginning to understand issues correctly. They have felt that they cannot think about security in the area without having normal and healthy relations with Iran. The positive remarks made by the Kuwaiti minister in charge of cabinet affairs—his second in the past 2 weeks—also points in this direction. In an interview with the AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT newspaper printed in Saudi Arabia, he said that his country wants normal relations with Iran. Previous to that in an interview with the Kuwaiti news agency KUNA, he had said that Resolution 598 should be implemented.

Maldives

17 Receive Death Sentence in Coup Trial

BK1208095089 Hong Kong AFP in English 0930 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Colombo, Aug 12 (AFP)—The trials of 68 foreigners and five locals involved in an armed attempt to overthrow the Maldives Government ended Saturday with 17 condemned to death, reports from the Indian Ocean atoll nation said.

Death sentences were passed on Maldivian businessman and coup leader Abdullah Lutfi, four other Maldivians and 12 Sri Lankan Tamils, diplomats contacted by telephone in the Maldives capital Male said.

They said 68 others, all Sri Lankan Tamils, found guilty of involvement in the November 3 armed attack on the tiny island of Male were jailed for terms ranging from between 17 and 38 years.

Further on Death Sentences

BK1208110189 Hong Kong AFP in English 1042 GMT 12 Aug 89

[By Amal Jayasinghe]

[Excerpt] Colombo, Aug 12 (AFP)—The trial of 73 people who carried out an armed invasion of the Maldives ended Saturday [12 August] with 17 of them condemned to death, reports from the Indian Ocean nation said. Sixty-eight of the men on trial were Sri Lankan Tamils and the other five locals.

Death sentences were passed on Maldivian businessman and convicted coup leader Abdullah Lutfi, four other Maldivians and 12 Sri Lankan Tamil merceneries, diplomats in the Maldives capital Male said by telephone.

They said the other 56 Sri Lankans were sentenced to jail terms of 17 to 38 years for taking part in the November 3 armed attack on the one-mile-long capital island Male to overthrow President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.

An Asian diplomat said by telephone that sentences against the five Maldivians were read out in open court Saturday to the cheers of hundreds of people outside the high court.

The coup trials took six months and created a sensation in the peaceful tourist paradise and Islamic Republic of 200,000 people.

Diplomats said the death sentence in Male is normally carried out by firing squad, but capital punishment has not taken place since 1951.

The condemned men could appeal to Mr. Gayoom, who has survived two previous coup attempts since coming to power in 1978. It was not immediately clear if the convicts had asked for a presidential pardon.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne has ruled out asking for a repeal of the Maldivian high court ruling condemning 12 Sri Lankans to death.

"They (the 68 Tamils) have commited a crime in another country. Why should we intervene? They deserve whatever punishment they get," Mr. Wijeratne told reporters here last week. [passage omitted]

Pakistan

Bhutto Urges Rejection of Sectarianism, Racism

BK1308044089 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in her message [on the occasion of 10th of the month of Muharram] has urged her countrymen to foil the contemptible designs of the elements which are bent upon harming the country by fanning regionalism, sectarianism and racism. She said that our love and affection for Imam Husayn, may God be pleased with him, demand that in the prevailing regional and international situation, we courageously fight undemocratic and antistate forces in order to strengthen our country's integrity and security.

Benazir Bhutto said that the best way of paying homage to Imam Husayn, may God be pleased with him, is to follow in his footsteps and spare no sacrifice to uphold the principles of righteousness and truthfulness. The prime minister stressed that the battle of Karbala' was the first encounter against dictatorship.

Democratic forces may be strengthened by pursuing the policies of toleration and brotherhood. We will be able to lead the nation and the country to the path of progress and prosperity if we strictly adhere to these principles, she added. The prime minister stressed the people to

make a pledge on the 10th of Muharram today that they will reject the anti-Islamic, antidemocratic and elements with dictatorial concepts and will make the country a real Islamic democratic state.

Minister Asks IDA To Avoid 'Show of Strength'

BK1308025089 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 13 Aug 89

[Text] Interior Minister Aitzaz Ahsan has called upon the Islamic Democratic Alliance [IDA] leaders and workers to avoid a show of strength at their rally scheduled for 17 August in Islamabad and remain peaceful in the greater interest of the country.

Talking to newsmen in Lahore yesterday, he said that he received the information that a group of the IDA plans to bring firearms to Islamabad on that day. The interior minister said that Islamabad, being the capital of Pakistan, symbolizes the federation and any such activity will be harmful to the country's interests.

Minister Denies PPP To Raise Private Armed Force

BK1208041489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Parliamentary Affairs Minister Khwaja Ahmad Tariq Rahim has strongly contradicted Senator Tariq Chaudhary's statement that the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] is considering raising a private armed force. He described the senator's statement as an attempt by frustrated elements to spread wrong information. In a statement in Lahore yesterday, he said the PPP believes in the power of the Pakistani people who are alone the source of PPP power.

Troops Sent to Town in Sind Following Violence

BK1208142889 Hong Kong AFP in English 1415 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Karachi, Aug 12 (AFP)—Paramilitary troops have been despatched to a small town in southern Pakistan's troubled Sind Province after three people died there in incidents of violence overnight, official sources said saturday.

Tension was already high in Nawab Shah, about 240 kilometers (149 miles) north of here, after police recovered the body of a fatally stabbed resident left near the local hospital, the sources said.

The town is home to an influential opposition leader, Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi.

In other incidents, one person died after an altercation between youths playing carroms in a local club, while the driver of a horse-driven cart died in a spray of bullets from two armed youths passing on a motor bike.

Police arrested 38 people in a crackdown to prevent the spread of violence, the chief of the district administration, Javed Ashraf Hussain, told reporters.

He denied that a curfew had been imposed, but said the paramilitary Sind Rangers had been deployed to maintain law and order in Nawab Shah.

The provincial chief minister, Syed Qaim Ali Shah, despatched two ministers of the ruling Pakistan People's Party and the Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), representing the Urdu-speaking settlers from India, to help the administration restore normality. He later said the situation was under control.

Relations between the native Sindis and Muhajir settlers have been tense in the southern part of the country after a series of recent clashes in the province's capital, Karachi, and its second biggest city, Hyderabad. Both cities are dominated by Urdu-speaking communities, which have complained about quota restrictions on jobs.

The MQM's Secretary General Farooq Imran said that members of his party were arrested by police after the administration lured them to join a joint peace committee in the area.

Both Sindi and Muhajir leaders have appealed for calm, as the deaths occurred on the eve of Ashura, a religious occasion when emotions run high between rival sects of Shiite and Sunni Moslems observing the death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Imam Husayn.

Punjab Chief Desires Center-Province Cooperation

BK1208042089 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Punjab Chief Minister Nawaz Sharif has said he desires cooperation between the elected governments at the federal and provincial level so that they may be able to dedicate their resources to solving the problems being faced by the common masses.

Speaking at an informal ceremony in Lahore yesterday, he suggested that a meeting of the Council of Common Interests be convened to settle differences between the federal and provincial governments.

Nawaz Sharif's 'Interference' Noted

BK1208043689 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, the federal minister for tourism, has said the federal government has taken a strong note of the alleged interference of Punjab Chief Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif in the country's foreign affairs. Talking to newsmen in Lahore yesterday, he said these policies will harm the federation of Pakistan.

Exports Drop 45 Percent From Jun to Jul

BK1108132589 Hong Kong AFP in English 1316 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 11 (AFP)—Pakistani exports rose 26.6 percent in July from a year earlier to 5.695 billion rupees (271.2 million dollars), the Federal Bureau of Statistics said Friday. The figure however was 45.2 percent lower than in June, when exports totalled 10.39 billion rupees (494.76 million dollars), the bureau said in a report.

Main export items in July were cotton yarn, cotton fabric, leather, ready-made garments, synthetic textiles and carpets.

Sri Lanka

51 Civilians Reportedly 'Massacred' by IPKF

BK1108145589 Hong Kong AFP in English 1443 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Colombo, Aug 11 (AFP)—Indian troops massacred 51 civilians in northern Sri Lanka after Tamil rebels killed seven soldiers in an ambush, travellers Friday quoted eyewitnesses and the local citizens' committee as saying. It was believed to be the worst incident of violence by Indian troops against civilians since the soldiers were sent here under the July 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan accord.

A spokesman for the Indian High Commission (Embassy) said 24 civilians were killed in "cross-fire" between the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) and rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the leading Tamil seperatist group.

The clash in the coastal town of Vavettithurai followed a landmine attack on an IPKF patrol by the rebels in the town's busy market area. An IPKF officer and six soldiers were killed in the ambush, while nine others were wounded, the spokesman said. He said seven rebels were also killed when the troops returned fire. "The LTTE is entirely responsible for the incident," the spokesman said, adding that the rebels had chosen a crowded area for the ambush and knew the soldiers would counterattack.

Travellers from the town arriving here quoted eyewitnesses as saying that among the civilians massacred by the troops after the ambush were seven children and six women. "The people were ordered out of their homes and forced to lie on the road and shot," the witnesses were quoted as saying. A report by the citizens' committee, believed to have close links to the LTTE, has been sent to the International Red Cross in Geneva, they said.

India deployed some 45,000 troops in the Tamil-populated north and east under the 1987 agreement between the two countries which sought to end Tamil separatism. The LTTE had repudiated the agreement and has been carrying on a bloody guerrilla war against the Indian troops.

The massacre is likely to embarass New Delhi at a time when India has been maintaining that the presence of the IPKF, resented by both the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE, is necessary to guarantee the safety and security of Tamils, observers here said. The LTTE, in a statement Monday, alleged that Indian troops went on a "murderous rampage" and killed 70 civilians and wounded 100.

"I saw bodies all over the town," the travellers quoted one witness as saying, while another, who had fled the town and returned after two days, was quoted as saying: "I felt sick. There was smell of decomposing and burning flesh all over the town." They said the citizens' committee had compiled a report with a list of names of 46 out of the 51 victims. The bodies of five others had been taken to an IPKF camp at Udupiddy and burnt there, they added.

They quoted the citizens' committee's report as saying that 20 people were seriously injured in the incident, while 123 houses, 43 shops, 69 vehicles, four boats and 149 fishing nets were torched by rampaging soldiers. The report also said 5,250 people who had fled their homes in panic had been sheltered in 13 camps in the area.

India Accused of 'Genocide'

BK1208083889 Hong Kong AFP in English 0734 GMT 12 Aug 89

[Text] Colombo, Aug 12 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's main Tamil separatist group has rejected New Delhi's claim to represent the Tamil people, accusing Indian troops on the island of committing genocide. The statement, issued Friday [11 August] in London by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and released here Saturday, followed eyewitness reports of Indian troops massacring 51 civilians in northern Sri Lanka.

The Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) was sent to Sri Lanka under a July 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan accord to end Tamil separatism in northeastern Sri Lanka.

New Delhi rejected Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa's demand last month to withdraw from the island, saying it would not pull out until some power has been devolved to the minority Tamils.

But the statement by the LTTE, which has fought the Indians since 1987, lambasted New Delhi. "The Government of India has no legal or moral right to speak about the safety and security of our people while its Armed Forces continue to commit (the) mass murder of Tamil and Muslim people in the north and east," it said.

The statement said nearly 6,000 innocent people had been killed by the Indian troops since they launched an operation to disarm the LTTE two months after signing the accord.

It followed reports that the IPKF massacred 51 civilians on August 2 in the northern coastal town of Valvettithurai after seven soldiers were killed in a rebel ambush. It "vehemently condemned" the "mass murder of innocent civilians" in Valvettithurai, calling it a "grave and unpardonable crime against the Tamil people."

"This is typical of several incidents in which our people are systematically wiped out in the guise of peacekeeping," the statement said.

It said there had been several clashes between the Indian troops and the LTTE in July which had left 28 soldiers and 17 guerrillas dead. Fifteen other soldiers were injured, it added.

A spokesman for the Indian High Commission (Embassy) here, commenting of the reports of the alleged massacre, said 24 civilians had been killed in "cross-fire" between Indian troops and LTTE rebels. He said the civilians had been caught in a clash between the LTTE and the IPKF after an officer and six soldiers were killed and nine wounded in a landmine ambush by rebels in the crowded market in the town. Seven rebels were also killed in the clash, he said.

"The LTTE is entirely responsible for the incident," the spokesman said, adding that the rebels had ambushed the troops in a crowded area, knowing that the soldiers would counter-attack.

Tamil sources conversant with the situation in the north and east said they were surprised that the LTTE had set the ambush in Valvettithurai, hometown of most of its leaders including Tiger Supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran. "There was an unwritten understanding between the LTTE and the IPKF that they would avoid attacks on each other in the Valvettithurai area, generally known as Vadamarachchi," one source said.

This was why there had been relatively fewer incidents involving the two sides in the region than elsewhere in the north, the source said. Others said the ambush was an indication of the LTTE's desperation over the Indian's refusal to withdraw from the island.

The Tigers "started the peace talks with the government in the hope that they can get the Indians off their backs, but now those hopes have been belied," said an observer, reflecting a widely held belief that it was Indian military pressure that prompted the LTTE to join Mr. Premadas's peace talks.

Reaction to Massacre

BK1208123589 London BBC World Service in English 1200 GMT 12 Aug 89

[From the "Newsreel" program]

[Text] The inhabitants of the northern Sri Lankan village of Velvettiturai, where Indian troops are reported to have massacred 51 Tamil civilians, have called on President Premadasa to challenge India over the killings. There has already been strong condemnation of the attack, although India has denied its forces were responsible. (Chris Knuttle) reports from Colombo:

[Begin (Knuttle) recording] The secretary of the Citizens Committee has sent the president the names, addresses, ages, and professions of 46 people who were killed by Indian soldiers in the Velvettiturai massacre. Those of five other people cremated in an Indian camp are still not known. [sentence as heard] The secretary claims he was tortured after being taken to an army camp, before being released after 3 days. Independent reports say at least 24 people are now missing after being taken away by Indian soldiers. The sources say that some people who had taken refuge in Hindu temples after their homes were attacked were dragged out and shot by soldiers.

The Sri Lankan foreign minister, Mr Ranjan Wijeratane, said today that if the reports of the massacre were correct, it was a violation of human rights which should never have happened.

The president met with cabinet ministers for 3 hours last night to discuss the timetable for a complete pullout of Indian troops. Ministers were asked for their views on India's latest offer of full withdrawal by next February. Sri Lanka has said it now wants the troops out within 6 weeks. The president is expected to take a decision in the next few days on what kind of a compromise might be possible. [end recording]

11 Aug Troop Pullout Package Announcement Slated

BK1108112589 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 11 Aug 89

[Text] Minister of Foreign Affairs and State Minister for Defense Ranjan Wijeratne told newsmen that President Premadasa would announce his final decision on the IPKF [Indian Peacekeeping Force] withdrawal package after the official Cabinet meeting today. In reply to a question on the devolution of power, the minister said that in keeping with the 13th Amendment of the Constitution, the government has already taken measures to

devolve powers to all provincial councils. What has happened in the north and east is that even the powers that were devolved could not be enforced due to continued violence in these areas. This is so even with the other provincial councils. Without peace no development process is possible.The minister said that India and Sri Lanka are trying restore unity among Tamil groups. Mr Wijeratne pointed out that India had taken 30 years to devolve powers to the states. Minister Wijeratne said that a peace committee comprising all Tamil groups will be set up once the IPKF withdrawal package is accepted. The committee will be headed by a cabinet minister appointed by the government. He will have no right of voting in any issue. Any decision taken by this committee will have to be unanimous. In reply to a question on the talks between the government and the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam], the minister said that the next round of talks would commence soon.